

THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

Vol. 140

MARCH, 1953

No. 841

EPISODES OF THE MONTH

THE EDITOR

UNPLEASANT MEDICINE

SIR FREDERICK LEITH-ROSS

HOW DIFFERENT IS TITO'S COMMUNISM?

DR. MALCOLM BURR

TOWARDS THE PERFECT STRAWBERRY

EDWARD HYAMS

TOM QUIXOTE

HUGH LYON

ESTATE DUTY: THE CASE FOR ITS REDUCTION

SIR EDWARD BOYLE, BT.

AND OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS BY K. KEITH-JOPP, DENYS
SMITH, ERIC GILLETT, G. B. STERN, MILWARD KENNEDY,
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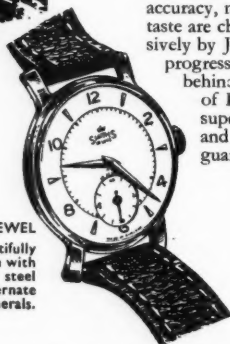


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THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

EPISODES OF THE MONTH

FEBRUARY has been a bad month. It began with a sensational storm which drove the sea into wide areas of Eastern Britain and the Low Countries, drowning hundreds of people and thousands of livestock, interrupting communications, wrecking many homes and spoiling much good farmland. The modern world is all too familiar with destruction wrought by human beings themselves, but it was stunned and bewildered by this manifestation of the forces of nature. There was intense irony in the spectacle of service-men and civilians working feverishly to build up our defences against the wind and the tide.

As we go to press the full details of the devastation are still not available, but we should like to express our sympathy to all those who have suffered, and our admiration for the fine work of Governments and the splendid generosity of well-wishers in many lands. If action could be as prompt and united in face of our chronic dangers as it has been in face of this sudden disaster, there would be much less cause for anxiety in the world to-day.

The Sudan and British Rule

THERE is no backward part of the world in which Britain can be more legitimately proud of her work than the Sudan. Memories being short, it is worth recalling that until the end of the nineteenth century, whether under local chiefs, Egyptian conquerors or Mahdi rule, the main industry of that vast area had been the slave trade and the firmest institution, apart from the cult of Islam, that of slavery. It is true that for a short period in the 'seventies Gordon, as Governor-General representing the Khedive of Egypt, succeeded in bringing part of the slavers' hunting-grounds under civilized control; but the ancient order revived the moment he was gone and continued to flourish without restraint until the reconquest of the country by Kitchener and the establishment of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium in 1899.

In the half-century which has since elapsed the Sudan has been so transfigured that no one who knew it at any period in its long centuries of rapine and strife would, if now restored to earth, believe the truth of what he saw; and that transfiguration has been the work of a British Civil

Service, recruited and directed by the Foreign Office, which (apart from individual achievements by famous Secretaries of State) has no greater or prouder departmental honour to its name.

The New Agreement

ALL that is now to be liquidated within the next three years. After long negotiations in which we repeatedly declared that we would stand by that part of the Sudan population, the Nilotic South, which from long experience trusts us better than its Arab and Moslem compatriots in the North, we have consented to the disbandment of yet another splendid British corps without assurance that its work will be faithfully carried on or even allowed to survive.

That is the darker side of the Agreement signed last month in Cairo by Her Majesty's Ambassador and General Neguib. It has not unnaturally been celebrated in Egypt as a personal triumph for him and also as the first instalment of greater triumphs to come. As for this country, there are features in the new Agreement which neither Mr. Churchill nor Mr. Eden nor any Englishman familiar with our Sudanese record can fail to lament; but if they enable General Neguib to work in closer understanding with Britain from now on, these concessions may to some extent have been justified. Let us see where in fact we now stand.

General Neguib's Initiative

THE latest signs from Egypt are by no means promising. There was every reason to assume from the declaration made by General Neguib soon after his assumption of power that Egypt had abandoned her claim to perpetual sovereignty over the Sudan. Though he has now put some strings to the right of self-determination which this declaration conceded, it was an act of statesmanship on his part, and we wish it had been promptly followed by an equally clear initiative on ours. A ministerial meeting should have been arranged, preferably with the Foreign Secretary himself, despite his many preoccupations in other parts of the world, and the Governor-General should have been directly associated with the discussions from the start. As things are, General Neguib kept the initiative in his own hands and proceeded to direct negotiation with the Sudanese parties. It is this procedure which, after much diplomatic but seemingly ineffectual palaver on our side, has resulted in the whittling away of the Governor-General's supervisory powers and the security they gave in the transitional period to the Southern Sudan.

The Cloven Hoof

NOR is that the worst. No sooner was the Agreement published than General Neguib proceeded to put a gloss upon it which Mr. Eden refuses to accept. The wording of Article 12 of the Agreement, which gives the Sudan an (a) and (b) choice—either some "link with Egypt" or

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"complete independence"—is unfortunate in that it fails to be positive and specific on a point on which no possible difference of interpretation should have been allowed, namely, the absolute and unfettered right of self-determination promised to the Sudan. It was a mistake to leave any opening in this very essential matter to the unreasoning Anglophobia which disfigures Egyptian (but not Sudanese) thought. General Neguib is manifestly unable to rise above that miasma, and by declaring that in the Egyptian interpretation "complete independence" definitely excludes membership of the Commonwealth (as though Canada or Pakistan or India were not completely independent!) he has shown the cloven hoof. The Agreement, let us admit it, should not have contained this equivocal (a) and (b) but should have provided clearly for straight and unalloyed freedom of choice. Since, however, the road to equivocation has been left open despite, as Mr. Eden told Parliament, a diplomatic amendment intended to rule it out, we can only stand by our interpretation and refuse, as Mr. Eden has done, to be jockeyed out of it.

Power and Responsibility

NO unbiased person could suppose that we in any way grudged the self-government and self-determination now assured to the Sudanese people. These were our own acknowledged aims and we rejoice that the elections necessary to their attainment are now to be held before April. Every reader of this Review must be familiar with our conviction that Africa for its peace and welfare must be governed in Africa, not from Whitehall, and governed by those of its inhabitants, whatever their race, best fitted to do it well. The Northern Sudanese will now be the first Arab and Moslem people since the great days of Islam to undertake responsibility for a backward people of different religion and race. We wish them well in this exacting task, and we regret only that, under Egyptian influence, they have modified the arrangements for the intermediary interval which they themselves had approved, and have also circumscribed the period during which the South can continue to be served by the British officers who have won its confidence.

The Waters of the Nile

THEIR future will now be in their own hands, and we have been happy to see from the declarations of almost all their leaders that they realize to what extent British co-operation can still be of use to them. Britain controls the more important of the sources of the Nile and she will, of course, keep the engagements regarding the Nile waters from Lake Victoria which she has made. But the new Nile water schemes, which mean even more to Egyptian welfare than to Sudanese, though they are vital to both, will encounter much difficulty between Uganda and the North if the Southern Sudanese are discontented and unco-operative.

For that reason as for others it is regrettable that we allowed the scheme

originally approved by the Sudanese legislature to be modified without regard to the feelings of the Southern tribes. We must hope that the new Sudanese Parliament when elected this spring will have regard to these considerations, for neither Egypt nor this country could properly reject any amendment to the agreement which that Parliament thought fit to propose.

The increase, storage and most effective distribution of the life-giving Nile waters will demand close co-operation between the three countries—the Sudan itself, Britain and Egypt—which will exercise sovereignty in the Nile valley; and we deplore the silly paraphernalia of international supervisory committees with which the Egyptian negotiators have defaced the original Sudanese scheme. They are nothing but political baroque.

Foundations Well and Truly Laid

HAPPILY all this fudge is only for the transitional period and will presumably find no place in the new Constitution which the Sudanese themselves—with self-reliance, we trust—will produce. Their elected representatives will be absolutely free, as we understand the Agreement, to shape their institutions and affiliations as they themselves think fit; and we must pray that in the next half-century they will find leaders capable not only of consolidating the miracle of progress achieved in the last, but also of building on it a national structure of increasing worth which all the world will respect. For we can say without overweening pride that the foundations of that structure, soon to be delivered into their hands, have been well and truly laid.

The Canal Zone

THE next question, that of the Canal Zone, is of much wider scope and cannot be successfully handled as an issue between Britain and Egypt alone. In the course of the protracted negotiations over the Sudan General Neguib has made public statements upon that question assuming that unconditional evacuation has already been agreed; but as circumstances have now driven him into the assumption of untrammelled dictatorial powers for a period of some years, we may perhaps hope that he will abandon this sort of hustings diplomacy, which bedevils any question to which it is applied. He—and we—will need all the wisdom we possess in clearing up the 1936 Treaty tangle, for it touches the international situation at many sensitive points, and there are certain of them on which no British Government—least of all one headed by a statesman of Mr. Churchill's infallible instinct in the strategy of peace—can be expected to give way. Our position on the Canal, together with the vital interest of all the Western nations, rests upon the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936. We have there at present four or five times the military strength which the Treaty permits; but that precaution was forced upon us by the last Wafd

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Government which denounced the Treaty unilaterally in defiance of its terms and then did its utmost to terrorize us into evacuation. This was firmly resisted by Socialist Ministers before the change of Government here in 1951, and our present Ministers have rightly stood even more firm.

It would be a relief to be able to reduce the present inflated garrison (which is suffering much hardship) to the Treaty limit; but there can be no question of doing so unless two vital conditions are fulfilled.

No More Abadans

IN the first place, the Egyptian Government must frankly admit our Treaty right to occupy the Zone and maintain its technical installations unless and until their security is guaranteed by some arrangement satisfactory to the North Atlantic Powers. (In outline, such an arrangement has already been proposed.) And in the second place, it is vital that those Powers should have an unconditional assurance that Egypt, in case of trouble, will be on their side—more particularly if Egypt is to play her part in guaranteeing the Zone against hostile seizure and is in consequence to receive the necessary arms.

Britain has spent hundreds of millions upon the equipment of the Zone, and that equipment is indispensable for the security, not only of Western strategic interests in the Middle East, but also of Egypt herself—assuming that Egypt remains loyal to the Western ideal of freedom and refuses to be lured, however covertly, into the Communist fold. There can be no question of sacrificing or even risking our investment in the Canal Zone as we sacrificed our investment at Abadan.

The Need for Long Spoons

CARE is imperative since it is idle to pretend that Egypt in her present state is proof against Communist intrigue. Soviet Russia has withdrawn her Minister from Israel and is manifestly embarking upon a wholesale anti-Semitic campaign—a pogrom which may dwarf even Hitler's atrocities. This may be due in part to a genuine fear of Jewish cosmopolitanism, since the Jewish cast of mind, which played so large a part in the original Soviet Revolution, is not at all adapted to the intellectual intolerance of Sovietism in its present imperialist and fiercely chauvinist form; but it is also indubitably prompted by a desire to set the Arab States against the West and to provoke as much strife as possible, not to say open war, between Israel and her neighbours. The Kremlin originally backed the Zionist cause because it wished to divide Britain and the United States on the complex and formidable question of Palestine. It is now, with its customary cynicism, reversing that policy, because the Jews have served its purpose and trouble can best be made by switching to the other side. Hence a kettle of fish which may very well be superficially attractive to the two flanking military dictators who, with all their officers, have scores to repay in Israel, but which they will be wise to sample with a very long spoon.

The Kremlin Game

A PART from the social ferment which they seek to create for non-Communist Governments everywhere, there is only one thing which the autocrats of the Kremlin can bestow upon their dupes, and that is arms. They would probably furnish these to the Middle Eastern States in the hope of provoking further warfare between them and Israel just as they are furnishing aeroplanes, tanks, guns and other munitions to China for the purpose of prolonging bloodshed in Korea; their underlying object in both cases being to weaken the Western Powers by embroiling them in every possible military commitment which can be engineered without the direct engagement of Russia's own military strength.

We have never failed to emphasize the justice of Arab grievances against the United Nations and the Western Powers in regard to Palestine; but it seems to us that a renewal of war between the Arab States and Palestine would be suicidal from the Arab standpoint, because, apart from the wider risks involved, it must commit them to the expenditure of money most urgently required for domestic reform and therefore indispensable to the stability of their own Governments. Their real enemy is not Jewish nationalism or Western imperialism, whatever griefs they may nurse against either, but Poverty. That is the direst and most dread of the Apollyons with whom they have to deal, and they have no hope of obtaining the kind of munitions, such as investment capital and capital goods, necessary to overthrow or at least contain that enemy from any source but the West.

The Supply of Arms

WE dwell on this because the supply of arms under various treaty engagements is one of the thorny questions which must be settled before any solution can be found for the Anglo-Egyptian quarrel over the Canal Zone. Egypt cannot play any adequate part in giving security to that Zone without modern arms of many kinds which she does not at present possess; and she cannot be given arms in any quantity—at least by the Western Powers—without a definite guarantee that they will not be used to renew the warfare which has already caused such widespread dispossession and misery in and about the Holy Land.

That issue, together with the strategic considerations of many kinds which centre in the Middle East, must be faced in order to reach a settlement in the Canal Zone. No solution will be possible unless General Neguib is prepared to take a broader and farther-sighted view upon the subject than previous Egyptian Governments; and unless also there is firm agreement on the policy to be pursued between Britain and the United States. President Truman's Administration never grasped the latter necessity; we can only trust that President Eisenhower's will be better advised, for the North Atlantic Powers will be faced with a situa-

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tion of rapidly increasing danger in the Middle East so long as Israel and her neighbours are not in some fashion reconciled.

Central African Federation

WITH the issue of two White Papers, one containing the Report by the Conference which has been sitting in London and the other the final draft of the Federal Scheme, the long controversy on Central African Federation moves into either its penultimate or else its final stage. The next step is the referendum in Southern Rhodesia, which will probably be held in the first week of April. If that proves favourable to Federation, the issue will come back for final settlement here. If it proves unfavourable, it will be mortal to Federation in any form and permanent evil to all three Territories will inevitably ensue.

The result, for or against, is very uncertain; but Sir Godfrey Huggins is conducting the campaign with the quiet good sense which is his outstanding quality. If any man can conquer the opposition which has been fostered, mainly by events in other parts of Africa, he will. With all our heart we wish him victory.

Socialist Opposition

MEANWHILE the state of opinion on the subject in this country is remarkable. No one would suppose from their present attitude that the question of federation was first referred to an impartial and highly experienced panel of Civil Servants by the leaders of the Socialist Party when they were still in power, because they recognized the urgency of the need; nor that those same leaders approved in principle and took the first action on the Report in favour of federation which the Civil Servants presented to them; nor that the present Federal Scheme departs in no essential feature from what the Civil Servants proposed.

The reason for this change of front is, of course, that articulate African opinion has been worked up by a propaganda which is in part only ignorant and silly but in part also sinister and cynical, and that it is difficult for people who are unfamiliar with primitive countries to realize that if majority opinion is to govern policy in them, then the welfare of those countries is doomed. The antagonism so bred is nevertheless sincere and fortunately may do more good than harm by helping to persuade doubtful voters in Rhodesia that Sir Godfrey Huggins is as right as his oversea detractors are wrong. And if Southern Rhodesia votes for Federation, then our Government is pledged to carry it through Parliament at home.

The Anxiety of the Tribes

NOT that we would minimize the present anxiety of the black African tribes; it is undoubtedly widespread in Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. But nothing could be worse for inter-racial peace and

progress than to yield to it, since it is profoundly mistaken and may happily be allayed almost as quickly as it is roused in those simple and receptive minds. Primitive and ignorant peoples shrink naturally from change as children shrink from a dark room; but the change is soon found to be as harmless as the room. It proved so less than thirty years ago when the Northern Rhodesian tribes protested fervently against transference from the rule of the Chartered Company, and it will assuredly prove so again.

We therefore beg any in this country who may be doubtful about the wisdom of ignoring African fears because some newspapers are predicting, and even inciting, violence if that is done, to remember the precedent of 1924. Africans who then thought the Crown was preparing to deprive them of their land soon realized that they were as safe with the Crown as with their old friend, the Company; and they will rapidly discover once again that the new policy means good to them, not harm. How strange indeed that any in this country should fear to entrust the backward people of Rhodesia to a predominantly British and Christian system of government, while at the same time they acclaim the transference of the backward Southern Sudanese to the control of a very recently civilized Islamic North, whose chief industry was still the slave-trade little more than fifty years ago! For our part, we do not hesitate to say that while we have good hope of the Sudan's new rulers, we have implicit faith in our own Rhodesian kin.

Primitive Kenya

ANOTHER month of struggle has brought little change in Kenya except a great increase of anxiety for the future of the Kikuyu tribe. Many old employers are beginning to feel that they cannot risk the loyalty of their Kikuyu hands, and even more Kikuyu are leaving the troubled areas of their own accord. This creates a serious problem which can be solved only by resettlement on new land, and we trust that the spate of migrants will not overtake the Government's measures for resettling them.

In this context we would call attention to a book about the Kikuyu by Dr. Leakey (*Mau Mau and the Kikuyu*, by L. S. B. Leakey, Methuen, 7s. 6d. net). As one who grew up from birth in Kikuyuland and is a fully initiated member of the tribe, the author may be forgiven for idealizing their primitive life, since he sheds much light upon their customs and offers a series of practical remedies for the grievances on which Mau Mau has thriven. The antidote to idealization may be found in first-hand early records of many kinds, which are usefully summarized in another small book which we recommend. This is *Before the Dawn in Kenya* by Christopher Wilson, C.M.G., M.C. (The English Press, Nairobi, 12s. 6d. net). The author is a very distinguished member of the Colony's Medical Service, who is now retired. Based entirely on original records, it is exactly what it claims to be in its sub-title, namely, an authentic account of life in East Africa under African rule.

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Canadian Protest

WHEN we hazarded a provisional opinion on the results of the recent Commonwealth Economic Conference we said that much would depend on the attitude of the new American Government and that a firmer and more united stand by the Commonwealth would have improved the chances of helpful American action.

On February 11 Canada protested strongly against American quota restrictions on the import of dairy products, saying that such restrictions "tend to undermine the confidence of oversea deficit countries in their ability to approach a balance by increasing their dollar earnings." We are tempted to suggest that Canada's own confidence may have been somewhat undermined by the fact that her farmers are running into difficulties. Great as is the seduction of North American trade, the wise course for Canada—and especially for Canadian farmers—lies in solidarity with the sterling area.

American Economic Policy

IN his report from Washington Denys Smith discusses ways in which the Eisenhower Administration may or may not help towards a solution of the dollar problem. Much can be done, and there is reason to hope that a certain amount will be done. But the basic fallacies of American economic policy remain and it is too much to expect that any American President will repudiate them. Repudiation should come from the Commonwealth, whose development is fatally impeded by those fallacies.

There seems to be a very widespread belief in North America that the dollar problem could be solved at once if other countries, such as the United Kingdom, would "put their own houses in order." This is a one-sided diagnosis. No doubt we have still far to go in curing ourselves of Utopian folly at home (though we do not think it is possible to go either as fast or as far as Sir Frederick Leith-Ross advises in our leading article this month). But Utopian folly is not confined to us; it is inherent in the economic system which the United States have been trying to impose upon the free world since 1945. Even if this system were applied consistently—even if, that is to say, the United States were prepared to practise the unconditional free trade which they have been preaching—there would still be trouble and the dollar problem would still exist. The non-dollar countries must be free to combine in preferential trading groups or there can be no hope of a permanent solution.

Mr. Henry Drummond-Wolff

FEW men have done as much to state the case for a preferential system of trade as Mr. Henry Drummond-Wolff, whose latest booklet, *Commonwealth Development and Defence*, can be obtained from the Empire Economic Union, Abbey House, Victoria Street, London, S.W.1. Mr.

Drummond-Wolff knows the Americans well and he is not in the least prejudiced against them. But he is honestly convinced that they have been and are still trying, consciously or subconsciously, to destroy the British Commonwealth as an independent force in the world and to establish their own economic hegemony.

It may perhaps be thought that his indictment is too comprehensive and that he fails to discriminate (he of all people!) between political, economic and strategic factors. But this is a minor criticism. The essential features of his work are lucidity and a tenacious grasp of principle, and for these no praise can be too high.

House of Lords Reform

THE vital and perennial question of House of Lords reform has come to life once more, and this time we earnestly trust that action will ensue. On February 3 Lord Simon moved the Second Reading of his Life Peers Bill, and Lord Swinton was able, by a happy coincidence, to announce that invitations to another Three-Party Conference on the House of Lords had that very day been sent out.

As we go to press the Parliamentary Labour Party has just decided not to accept this invitation; Socialists are deeply divided on the House of Lords, as on so many other matters. But the Liberals have accepted, and in spite of the Socialists' refusal there is no reason why the other two Parties should not hold a Conference; and if no agreement should emerge from this, it is to be hoped that a Conservative reform measure would be passed through Parliament fearlessly and without delay.

The Tory Tradition

WE have been surprised to see that copies of the first edition of Mr. John Biggs-Davison's *Tory Lives* (Putnam's, 15s.) are still available in many bookshops. It was published before Christmas and should by now have gone through several editions. The author is among the most thoughtful of the younger Conservatives and his latest book, though it contains some inaccuracies and is not free, in our opinion, from occasional errors of judgment, deserves to be very widely read. By means of a few brief biographical essays he contrives to illustrate the central theme of Tory history—an abiding loyalty to Church and Crown. From Falkland to Disraeli was a long way, and there was much humbug and opportunism by the way; but the tradition can be clearly seen and we must always be careful to preserve it.

UNPLEASANT MEDICINE

By SIR FREDERICK LEITH-ROSS

I HAVE the impression that most people are very confused about our financial position. During the War, we dissipated capital on an enormous scale and lost a large part of our best foreign investments, so that it was to be expected that we would have to reduce our standard of living. After the War, however, despite many restrictions and professions of austerity, the Labour Government embarked on a series of ambitious measures purporting to raise the standard of living. They added hundreds, indeed thousands of millions, to the public expenditure and despite raising taxation to wholly excessive levels, they were only able to make both ends meet by getting loans and grants from the United States of America and the Dominions, accumulating sterling debts to almost every country in the world, and eventually by devaluing the currency. One would have thought that this would have brought home to everyone the financial morass in which the Socialist experiments had landed us. Yet many people seem to think that we are more prosperous than ever and do not appear to realize that we have been living beyond our means, spending more than we were earning, and that such prosperity as we have been enjoying has been based on borrowing or wasting capital.

Our very successful rake's progress has been made possible by the combined effects of the sterling area system and the exchange control system. The sterling area system provides that—apart from some minor restrictions on capital movements—the currency of any member can be freely used for payments

to any other member of the area. But it cannot be utilized for payments outside the area, and especially for payments to the dollar area, except under strict limitations. The freedom from exchange restrictions within the area benefits the trade of all members of the sterling area, but it has worked out especially to the advantage of the United Kingdom, as the biggest importer. It enables us to buy food and raw materials and gold and dollars from the other members of the sterling area against payment in sterling, which can normally be used only to buy United Kingdom exports: and if the exports needed are not available, the sterling we pay for our imports gets banked up here in the form of the so-called sterling balances. These balances represent our indebtedness to our suppliers and the balances due to the rest of the Commonwealth now amount to over £2,500 millions.

As I said, these balances cannot be freely converted into dollars. Not only are we the bankers for the sterling area, but we also hold the dollar pool for the area. We release dollars from the pool to meet essential requirements of the area, but any surplus dollars are paid over to us, against a sterling credit. In fact, in the three and a half years since 1949, the United Kingdom has had a dollar deficit of nearly £1,000 millions in current account, whereas the rest of the sterling area has had a net surplus of dollars and gold, which we have been able to use to meet our deficit.

Being the banker puts us in a very strong position, but it also imposes on us a great responsibility. We should

always remember that sterling is not only the currency of the United Kingdom: it is the currency of most of the Commonwealth. We are responsible for its management and the policy we follow should be determined by the needs of the whole Commonwealth and not by our special parochial interests. We are the trustees of the whole sterling area and we shall be failing in our trust if we do not do all we can to maintain the value of the sterling banked with us. We have already devalued sterling once since the War, involving a loss of many hundred millions of pounds to the other countries of the sterling area, and we cannot afford to do so again. The system will be inequitable, indeed it cannot in the long run be maintained, unless sterling remains as valuable as dollars, at the official rate of exchange: and that is precisely what is now in question.

The doubt is due to the exchange control system under which we have lived since 1939, by which sterling became an inconvertible paper currency supported by exchange control. In former days, when the pound was worth its weight in gold, and could be converted into any other currency in the world, we could not live above our means and run a deficit, or at least it was brought home to everyone in the country very quickly. The deficit had to be settled by the export of gold and, when our gold reserves fell, internal credit was automatically tightened up, with the result that business contracted, prices fell and the balance of payments was restored. To-day the pound is artificially pegged and so long as other countries will accept sterling we can go on cheerfully buying from them and their sterling balances pile up here, useless except for the purchase of United Kingdom exports. The sterling area, under these conditions, has operated to encourage profligacy.

The system of exchange control conceals from us the effect of our internal inflation. It falsifies the value of money at home while it destroys confidence abroad. At home, internal prices and costs rise and people complain of the increase in the cost of living, but they do not appear to realize that what is happening is that the value of their money is falling. This is concealed by the official exchange rate which is pegged so long as the reserves can be made to last, with tightened-up controls and restrictions on travelling and other transactions, while Ministers have to perjure themselves by declaring that they have no intention of altering the exchange until the moment comes when they are forced to do so. With an artificial exchange rate, we can be sure of nothing except that there is no chance of the exchange appreciating and every chance that it will sooner or later depreciate. Sterling has had to be devalued three times in the last thirty years, and this is a dangerous expedient for all who value social stability. Currency depreciation was one of Lenin's prescriptions for destroying capitalism. Mussolini and Hitler and the Chinese Communists owed their rise very largely to it; and it is one of the primary causes of the present moral disintegration in France. Abroad, our exchange control cannot deceive people: they know that our money is worth precisely what it will fetch and with their experience of depreciated currencies, they will be reluctant to hold sterling and will do their best to get rid of any that comes into their hands as quickly as they can, even at a discount. Exchange control, as practised in this country and others to-day, is an insidious disease which spreads its infection throughout the economic system. It should be dealt with by operation as soon as possible, because the longer the system is maintained the more difficult will it be to eradicate its effects.

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Exchange control, as I have said, conceals the real extent of our internal inflation. During the War a certain amount of inflation was more or less inevitable: but since the War ended, we have continued to water our currency by constantly expanding Government expenditure and increasing wages to meet the increase of prices. Nor has this process yet stopped. The present Government has tightened up credit to private industry and individuals: but the effect has been neutralized by a steady increase in Government expenditure and in borrowing by Government agencies and nationalized industries. The Government has had to borrow nearly £700 million since last April to meet its needs: and though it should get a good deal of this deficit back in the course of this year, it looks as if there would be a considerable short-fall in the Budget. Taxation is too high and savings too low. Wages are still going up. In 1951 wage-rates increased by 11 per cent.: prices increased by 12 per cent. Last year the increases were more moderate but wages went up at least 5 per cent. It is impossible to increase wages by 10 per cent., or even 5 per cent., a year without any corresponding increase in productivity, and at the same time to suffer no change in the value of money. If the increase of prices is regarded as a justification for claiming a further increase of wages, we find ourselves at once in a vicious circle, which eventually ends in a breakdown of the exchange and an open depreciation of the currency. The increase of internal prices makes the market here an attractive one for foreign suppliers, and so long as they are prepared to accept sterling, and there is not a complete control of imports, as there is in Russia, imports will flow in to absorb some of the excess purchasing power. These imports will exceed our exports, with a consequential adverse

balance of payments and an accumulation of sterling balances in the hands of our overseas suppliers.

This process can continue more or less indefinitely so long as our suppliers are willing to accept sterling. But there are growing signs that they are not willing to do so much longer. We have from the outset had to pay for our imports from America and Canada with dollars, as they will not accept inconvertible sterling. Some other foreign countries insisted at an early date that if they were to accept sterling they must have a gold guarantee—(i.e. if the gold value of sterling depreciated we had to pay a proportionately additional amount of sterling). Argentina, Persia, Belgium and Switzerland had arrangements of this kind, which cost us heavy payments when sterling was devalued in 1949. European countries, for the most part, accepted payments in sterling until recently: but last year our deficit with Western Europe—under the European Payments Union—had to be settled in gold. We had exhausted our credit with them and they no longer accepted sterling. In recent months the position has improved, but only as the result of drastic import restrictions. The non-sterling countries are still anxious to get rid of their sterling holdings and last year they succeeded in reducing them by over £200 million.

On the other hand, the sterling balances of the Commonwealth countries steadily increased until they reached a peak of £3,100 million in June 1951. During the next year they were reduced by £545 million: but this conceals two contradictory movements. The amounts due to the Dominions fell by £679 million—due to the flood of imports from the United Kingdom which, until recently, they were taking. I have not seen separate figures for the various Dominions, but it is known that India, Australia and New Zealand have

been drawing heavily on their balances and the last Commonwealth Conference but one urged them to restore a balanced position. Some of the Dominions certainly added to the strain on the sterling area reserves during last year; they also indulged in a good deal of inflation. As Mr. Colin Clark is reported to have said, the position of the Commonwealth is that two of the older sons are thinking of leaving the house, and two very loyal sons (Canada and New Zealand) are trying hard to disguise the fact that their father has become a hopeless dipsomaniac, and that another son (Australia) is following in his footsteps. It should be added, however, that the spree of spending by Australia and New Zealand during last year was not so much due to internal inflation as to the fabulous prices realized by their wool in the previous year, and I think it is rather hard that we should criticize them for drawing so freely on their sterling balances with us and then criticize them even more severely for imposing restrictions on imports from the United Kingdom.

The Colonies, on the other hand, have been the good boys of the family. They have been steadily increasing their sterling balances until they amount now to something like £1,200 million. We have been imposing on them a prudent financial discipline which we used to practise ourselves but which we have long since abandoned. We are now engaged in extending the system of self-government in the colonial areas and we must expect increasing pressure from them against the present system. They will want to be paid in goods at competitive prices, or in convertible currency, and they will not be prepared indefinitely to send us their food and raw materials in return for a book entry of sterling.

Another problem which interests all parts of the Commonwealth is the need

of capital to finance schemes of development and industrialization. We may say that some of the Dominions have been forcing the pace too much, but we must remember the social and political objectives they have in mind—particularly in Australia. We in this country have been adding to the deficit in our balance of payments by investing capital in the other countries of the Commonwealth during the last three years at the rate of some £200 millions per annum. This would be all to the good, if we could afford it and if we could supply the capital equipment needed without undue delay. Neither of these conditions are fulfilled to-day; and if we are to continue to export capital on this scale, we must not only secure a balance of external payments but also provide for a surplus in our favour sufficient to cover the export of capital. Moreover, we must produce a surplus of the actual capital goods which the Commonwealth countries want; otherwise the capital we export will be represented merely by an increase in the sterling balances due to the Dominions, and not by real assets.

At the present time, there seems little prospect of our being able to achieve either of these objectives, and so the Commonwealth countries—and particularly the Dominions—are turning more and more to the United States both for capital and for capital goods. The capital goods they need are available there, but the payment for them would put an additional strain on the dollar resources of the sterling area; and if we cannot supply it, it would be most desirable that the Dominions should be able to raise the capital, either in the form of public loans or private issues, in the U.S.A. There is little likelihood of this being practicable until confidence has been restored in sterling as a fully convertible currency.

The present sterling area and

exchange control system is, in fact, breaking down. A great deal of business is being transacted in the free market, for transferable sterling. These transactions take place at a discount on the official rate: but holders of sterling are prepared to accept the loss involved rather than retain sterling. The need for convertibility is no longer an open question: it is essential if we are to keep our economy going and maintain the sterling system which is important to all the area, but which is especially vital to us in the United Kingdom. The only question is how and when convertibility can be attained.

The Government appear to be waiting till "the conditions have been created" in which sterling could become and remain convertible. They appear to contemplate a joint approach, with the Commonwealth, to the U.S.A. for further assistance—direct or indirect. The U.S.A. could certainly help, but they have done a great deal already to help us since the War and I think they will quite rightly refuse any more inter-governmental loans until we put our house in order by stopping inflation and reducing Government expenditure. Some development loans may be arranged by the International Bank, but no great flow of investment capital to the sterling area is likely so long as sterling is inconvertible. They could also help our trade by reducing their tariffs and relaxing some of their vexatious customs procedures. There appears to be a growing appreciation in the U.S.A. that their trade cannot be balanced without increased imports: but it is rather much to expect any significant relaxations of tariff policy from a Republican Congress. An increase in the official price of gold would also greatly help the sterling area: I believe that it will come, but not until the U.S.A. runs into a depression. At the present time, it would be resisted

as too inflationary. There is a good deal of talk of a possible Atlantic Payments Union, financed by America and Canada: it would be excellent, but it seems to me too airy-fairy to be practical. We may well be able to obtain some dollars through off-shore purchases of armaments: this will be a valuable but temporary benefit. The easiest way for the U.S.A. to help us—and at the same time help themselves—is by maintaining a high level of business activity in the States, which will mean steady buying of the raw materials produced in the Commonwealth. And, of course, once we have put our house in order, I imagine that we should be able, without much difficulty, to arrange an exchange credit—a cushion against bear speculation—but such a credit ought not to require to be used. Beyond that it would be a mistake to expect much.

In fact, the main conditions needed for convertibility rest in our own power. They are partly internal and partly external. Internally, we must put a stop to inflation. The Government has done something to this end by the increase in the Bank Rate and the restriction of credit in the market. But this is not sufficient: its effect has been largely neutralized by the continued expansion of Government expenditure. Means must be found to reduce Government expenditure and especially that which most promotes consumption. The obvious first step is to cut out all the remaining subsidies on food, without reducing taxation or increasing wages. But this may not be enough and some way should be found to relieve the Budget of the excessive burden imposed by the Health Service. In any case prices must be allowed to rise to take off the excess purchasing power already in existence, and the objective will not be attained if we allow wages to be increased in order to compensate for the

increase of prices. The increase is the legacy of past inflation which must be absorbed. Similar measures have been taken by many countries in Europe—particularly by Germany, Holland and Norway—and they had an immediate effect in stabilizing prices, correcting the adverse balance of payments and making those countries our creditors.

Externally, we must apply convertibility by stages. In the first place, it should apply only to sterling owned by foreigners—whether currently earned or sterling balances. These balances, as I have said, have been reduced to £842 million, of which about £150 million belonging to Egypt have been blocked by agreement and are only to be released by annual instalments. So the net amount is now something less than £700 million. We should be prepared to pay them off if the holders want to draw them out: in fact, a substantial proportion would probably be retained here. The sterling balances of the Commonwealth countries could not be made immediately convertible. It would be inadvisable to freeze them, as this would discredit sterling: our best course is to get the sterling area countries to consolidate the undertaking already given that they would maintain a balanced position so that they would not need to draw on these balances except in an emergency. In any case, the great bulk of their balances are required as working funds or currency reserves and could not be withdrawn suddenly. For the time being we should have to maintain some control over capital movements; but all current sterling receipts should, in future, be freely convertible, and, of course, all restrictions on the use of such sterling for payments to countries which are willing to accept sterling should be abandoned. The exchange rate of \$2.80 fixed in 1949 would have to be relaxed and the rate might fall at first.

But if we promote a steady disinflationary policy at home, and can prevent further wage increases, the rate should maintain itself very near the present official level.

Convertibility entails a reorientation of domestic policies, which creates political problems; but it is absolutely essential that we should face up to these problems if we are to get right. The difficulties should not be exaggerated; even greater difficulties will face us if we shirk the job. I believe, indeed, that unless sterling is made convertible again soon, the sterling area will break up and we shall be forced into a succession of devaluations, on the French model, or into a totalitarian regime of controls over every branch of economic activity on the Russian model. I do not think that either of these alternatives is wanted here and I believe that if our people can be got to understand the hard realities of our position, they will be ready to accept such sacrifices as are necessary to avoid them.

The programme could best be implemented by agreement between all parties. Unfortunately, the Labour Party appears to be opposed to convertibility. Perhaps some of the Socialists think that inflation is desirable, because it reduces the value of capital and stimulates over-full employment. But the prescription of perpetual doses of inflation will not work. The Welfare State is a delusion, and social security is meaningless, if it is not based on a sound currency. The most important social service for every Government is to ensure that the currency of the country is solid and solvent; and this cannot be assured unless it is freely convertible, at any rate for current transactions.

Some people argue that we cannot take any step towards convertibility unless we have built up gold and dollar reserves equal, or nearly equal, to our liabilities. I regard this as absolute

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nonsense. Reserves are only useful to meet a drain and should be used freely for that purpose. They need not be immense: holding reserves of £2,000 or £2,500 million could create a very difficult problem for our market authorities. Twice in the last thirty-five years we have found ourselves without any reserves at all and yet we survived. I regard the trend as being much more important than the amount of our reserves. If the trend is right, our reserves will not need to be used: if the trend is wrong, any reserves will rapidly disappear.

The steps which the Government have been taking are in the right direction and they have done quite a lot to strengthen sterling since they have been in office. But to restore confidence fully, a good deal more is necessary; and the sooner action is taken, the better it will be. I do not believe that time is on our side. There may be risks in taking action soon, but there are equal or greater risks in delaying action. If one has to take a dose of unpleasant medicine, it is surely better to swallow it at a gulp and get the full benefit than to sip it gradually or change one's mind and pour half of it away. Half-measures in economics give you the maximum opposition and the minimum results. Internal prices, costs and

wages will go on increasing and, if we wait, the probability is that convertibility, if attainable at all, will only be attainable at a lower parity.

I should like, finally, to emphasize a point which is not always realized. Currency management rests on psychological, as well as real, factors. Currencies are very contrary things: the more we try to restrict their transfer, the more they will escape our controls: but leave the money free and it will remain here. A part, and perhaps a large part, of the dollar gap is due to the universal desire to hold a convertible currency. If confidence in sterling were restored, large reserves would be maintained here which now for safety are kept in New York. Moreover, we must remember that we have to live down the memories of 1947 and 1949. The Government have announced that convertibility is their definite objective, and any appearance of hesitation or shilly-shallying will stop the revival of confidence. If we want to avoid disaster, we must pull ourselves together some day and the longer we delay the more difficult it will be. The solution of our exchange problem, I am convinced, lies in our own hands and I hope that a decision will be taken in the next Budget.

FREDERICK LEITH-ROSS.

HOW DIFFERENT IS TITO'S COMMUNISM ?

By DR. MALCOLM BURR

WITH the victorious emergence of Tito at the end of the war the destiny of Yugoslavia as yet another satellite of the Kremlin seemed accomplished. Yet those who looked deeper below the surface were

convinced that a divergence was inevitable.

What was the principal factor in this divergence ? It was the fundamental difference in character between the Russian people and the Yugoslav, and

in particular the Serbian, which has borne the brunt of Yugoslav history. This difference has arisen out of the contrasting conditions in Russia and in the Balkans.

In Russia there are limitless areas with practically no local boundaries and unrestricted fluidity of the people. This was not conducive to the development of small peoples or to the emergence of commanding personalities. The primitive Russian states, such as Novgorod and Pskoff, were democratic in form, but the people felt the need of a head, and could find no leader. There is a poem by one of the Tolstoys describing how a deputation of Russians went abroad to find a monarch,

Come thou and be monarch over us :
Our land is rich and beautiful, they said,

and each verse ends with the refrain,

u nas poryadka nyet.
With us order there is not !

It was the Varangians who accepted the invitation, when the sons of Rurik laid the foundations of the Russian Empire at Kiev in the 9th century and aped the splendours of Byzantium. But in the forests of the North the Slav blood was diluted by the absorption of pagan Finnish tribes, whose glum mentality has made an impress on the Russian character. Russia has produced many thinkers and writers, but seldom men of action. Of the leaders of the Bolshevik revolution few were Russians. Dzerzhinski was a Pole : Trotsky, Kamenev, Zinoviev and Kaganovich were Jews : Stalin, as everyone knows, is an Osseto-Georgian and Beria is a Georgian. So the human character of Russia is still dominated by aliens.

There is, too, an ancient kernel of traditional communism seen in the rural *mir*, where a village owned common land, which was distributed afresh

every year by the authority of the *starosta*. But the Communism that we see in Russia to-day is a very different thing, the result of a sinister synthesis personified by Stalin, with the true Russian characteristic of domination from above. Varangian prince, Tartar khan, Muscovite grand duke, Romanov tsar, or to-day the mostly alien Politburo—it is always the same thing under a different name. It is hard to imagine Russia without absolutism.

But the history and development of the Southern Slavs has been different. Most of them swarmed southwards into the Balkans. Those who penetrated into Greece, even into the Peloponnese, were absorbed, leaving their memory only in place-names. Those who remained on the north of the Save and Danube, chiefly Croats, were subordinate throughout their history, politically to Budapest, socially to Vienna. In the plains they found material prosperity but political inferiority. The Slovenes in their mountainous north-western corner were not numerous enough to make a nation, but sturdy enough to resist absorption by the Germans and Italians. Among the mountain-locked valleys of the Balkans, on the other hand, we witness the evolution of the Serbian peoples. Here were produced small and vigorous national units with intense patriotic sentiment and outstanding leaders, essentially men of action. In the Balkans we find the Serbs setting up a kingdom in the 12th century that lasted into the 15th and was revived in the 19th in the form of a crowned democracy. In the fastnesses of Montenegro we see a tiny principality that refused to be submerged by the Ottoman deluge and was still in the Homeric stage when I first walked across it in the last century.

In Russia we see Communism

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rammed down the throats of a people accustomed to obey. In Yugoslavia we see it rising out of a people intolerant of dictation, accustomed to fight and to die. During the Ottoman period the Serbs evolved an institution that exercised a profound influence upon their history and development and has contributed to keep them out of the clasp of the Kremlin. That is the famous *zadruga*, a word that carries the notion of comradeship. Unlike the Russian *mir*, which was a village institution, the *zadruga* was a family association, holding and working a territory in common. They were generally in the mountains, in the form of a stockaded enclosure. The members, all related, elected one of their number to be head man or *stareshina*, whose word was law. This institution became extinct in the kingdom of Serbia during the last century, but it seems to have survived in a few remote localities down to the liberation of South Serbia in 1913. It does not appear ever to have existed in Montenegro.

The name was then applied to the co-operative organizations which were numerous and prosperous before the outbreak of the Second World War. A rich *zadruga* could own plant and machinery beyond the powers of the individual, so there was every incentive to join. During the German occupation the Nedich Government made great efforts to encourage the *zadruga* movement, so when the Communist system was adopted the machinery was ready to hand. There was no need for the brutality of collectivization on the Russian model.

So on the Russian side we have the *kolhoz*, the collective farm, on the Yugoslav the *zadruga*, the co-operative association. These words are not only not translations; they have utterly different meanings. This vital fact has

been clearly brought out in a series of articles recently published in the newspaper *Istanbul*, by a Turkish journalist named Erol Güney, who has recently been studying Yugoslav conditions on the spot. The facts which he describes and the figures that he gives are so impressive that I make free use of them here, as I find them fitting naturally into the picture in my mind formed by more than half a century's knowledge of the country.

While membership of the *kolhoz* is compulsory, membership of the *zadruga* is voluntary. In fact, it is purposely made as attractive as possible in order to encourage the peasantry to support the system. In Macedonia 62 per cent. of the farmers and 60 per cent. of the arable land are in the *zadrugas*. In the rich Vojvodina, to the north of the Danube, 56 per cent. have joined the *zadrugas*. In Yugoslavia to-day there are 6,900 *zadrugas*, in which are grouped 420,000 families.

Nevertheless 75 per cent. of the land is still in the hands of the peasant proprietors, that is, 82 per cent. of the whole population. Only 21-22 per cent. of the land is worked by *zadrugas* and 4.5 by state farms. The *zadruga* does not own its land; that still belongs to the farmers, who may withdraw at the end of three years. In some *zadrugas* the peasant is paid a wage, with rent for his land and for the stock, live or dead, which he has brought in. In some cases he cannot withdraw, yet continues to receive an annual rent equivalent to 6 per cent. of the value of the land. And what is more, this is hereditary. Such a state of affairs is inconceivable in Russia, where, we read, the latest thing has been to take away even the tiny plot of glebe so far allowed to the individual.

Unlike the *kolhoz*, where plant and machinery are the property of the State, which draws from 40 to 60 per cent. of

the produce in payment for its use, the *zadrugas* own their equipment, the State intervening only to help finance the purchase of machinery. The balance of the output of the *kolhoz* is bought by the State at a low figure. This is also the case in Yugoslavia, but the peasant is still free to sell his produce direct to any customer he chooses. In the *kolhoz* the manager is nominated by the regional secretary; in the *zadruga* by vote, show of hands or secret ballot. The *kolhoz* is obliged to work out a programme laid down by authority, regardless of payability; the *zadruga* draws up its own plan.

The Serbian peasant has been a yeoman farmer since his liberation from the Ottoman. Before the First World War there were no big estates in the country and I do not believe there was a single one of more than 100-150 hectares. On the union, the great estates in the former Hapsburg territories were broken up and distributed among the people. So in Yugoslavia there was no squirearchy, no land-owning class to be regarded as enemies of the people. When Lenin cried to the land-hungry *muzhiks* "*Grabit!*"—which means the same thing in Russian and English—there was an orgy of murder of the land-owners. When I was last in Moscow, in 1926, it was regarded as a crime to be the son of a *pomeshchik*. In Yugoslavia the peasantry and landowners were identical.

If the position in the countryside in Yugoslavia is so different from that in the U.S.S.R., what is the situation in the industrial world? Here there is a different class of worker, without the steadying mentality of the peasant. But we may at least expect to find more individuality here than in the Russian factory, and in fact we do. Let us take, for example, the big factory at Rakovitsa, along the railway about six or

seven miles out of Belgrade, with the facts and figures given by Güney. Here tractors are being made and motor pumps for irrigation. Of the 1,400 hands employed, 1,000 are engaged directly in production. Every year these elect by secret vote a council of 75, two-thirds of whom must be actual working men, not engaged in administration. This council then elects a managing board of ten, one of whom is elected chairman. The only member appointed from above is the general manager. This board meets daily, while the big council meets only once or twice a month. The posts are all honorary. It is anticipated that before long the general manager also will be elected by the men. It is interesting to note that this official nomination of the general manager is sharply criticized in the country as being contrary to tradition.

The question at once arises, to what extent is the voting really free? To what extent are influence and pressure brought to bear? To what extent does the Communist Party dominate the elections?

We get notable figures in Güney's report. Of the 1,400 hands at Rakovitsa, 300—that is to say, 22 per cent.—are members of the Party. On the council the figure is 60 per cent. and on the board 80 per cent., while the directors are almost all members. This sounds more like the Russian model. To this the reply given by Güney is that as a rule the most energetic and intelligent workers are for that very reason members of the Party, and it is out of respect for their capabilities that they are elected by the main body. The similarity to Russian conditions is therefore more apparent than real. Besides, the Party endeavours to recruit the best elements, and it is a corollary that the managers and leading spirits in all undertakings, both factories and

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zadrugas, are usually members of the Party.

The workers are interested in both the quantity and the quality of their product, for they are remunerated by results, and in most cases have to face the competition of other works. At the moment shortage of materials is having a braking effect upon all these plans. The workers are not paid a fixed wage, but by results, and the distribution allotted is determined not by the State, but by the council.

There are certain inevitable restrictions upon this liberty of planning and remuneration. The profits must be approved by the State. Further, although there is no wage in our sense of the word, there is a fixed category of workers according to their qualifications, so that the highly skilled mechanic draws a bigger share than a general labourer. And there is a fixed minimum proportion to protect the vital interests of the latter class. This is the equivalent of a minimum wage. The factory is also subject to a curious form of taxation, as a contribution towards the expenses of the State and also as an accumulative fund upon which the State draws to provide help to the factory in the event of temporary difficulty. The proportion of such taxation is fixed by the Parliament, and it may be very high indeed. Thus at Rakovitsa it is three times the amount distributed in salaries. This tax is the principal source of revenue of the State, forming as much as 65 per cent. of the total receipts, of which national defence claims no less than 80 per cent.

On the political side it is not so easy to be precise. From the evidence it is clear that Tito is very sure of himself, as the recent elections making him President have proved, and there seems to be no serious opposition in the country. For that reason control has

been much relaxed. Of the dictatorship stage, which in Russia after a quarter of a century has been intensified, Yugoslavia has within a few years begun to divest herself. She has stopped the terror and adopted decentralization in direct contradiction to the Soviet policy of excessive centralization. The Soviet system, with its evolution into a colonizing imperial power, is the very antithesis of the Yugoslav ideal, just as in the U.S.S.R. there is no stimulus of profit, whereas in Yugoslavia it is the very keynote of the system.

We must realize that Yugoslavia is rapidly passing out of the condition of the Police State. That for a time was a disagreeable necessity. Now Tito feels himself strong enough to relax, and we are witnessing a Communist country without a censorship. Even *émigrés* are corresponding freely with their relatives and friends in the country. There appears to be no restriction and some letters are startling in their frankness. People who have been travelling in the country recently relate that there has been no restriction on their contacts with the people, who express themselves with surprising freedom.

Even those of us who have been most bitterly opposed to Tito and all his works are compelled to admit to-day that he has shown high qualities, not only of leadership, but also of sagacity. What the old Yugoslav politicians were unable to do in a quarter of a century he has done at once. He has buried the animosity between Croat and Serb, which was the fruit of a misguided policy in Belgrade, and of friction over Macedonia. He has shown realism in his relaxation of the iron hand, and one cannot but feel that the evolution of Yugoslavia will continue on lines that will ultimately be acceptable to all parties.

MALCOLM BURR.

IMPRESSIONS OF ISRAEL

By K. KEITH-JOPP

"THERE was an old woman who lived in a shoe; she had so many children she didn't know what to do. . . ." The familiar lines of the old nursery rhyme describe, with considerable accuracy, the situation in which Israel finds herself to-day, but whereas the old woman of the rhyme discovered, if memory serves, a simple solution in smacking all her children and packing them off to bed, Israel is unfortunate in having no simple solution at hand.

A glance at the figures will give an idea of the position. Briefly, in May, 1948, when independence was proclaimed, the population of the country stood at approximately 650,000, but because of the pledge given to World Jewry that the new state's doors would stand open to receive all comers—a pledge which has been kept with unswerving fidelity and a sublime disregard of the consequences—by 1952, only four years later, the total had risen to more than double the original figure.

It does not take a trained mind to envisage the result: hardship, shortages, appalling problems of absorption and resettlement. But the situation is further complicated, first, by Israel's position as a country poor in natural resources, relatively undeveloped and still suffering from the effects of the recent war; and secondly by the fact that the tremendous increase in her population is artificial and has been produced, not by a rise in the birth-rate and a fall in the death-rate, but by a sudden influx of people from countries as different in climate and custom as Roumania and Iraq. The total effect has, therefore, been to produce a

complex of social, economic and political problems which is little short of overwhelming.

Of this complex, the economic aspect is the one that has received most attention in the world press. Broadly, it is the problem of every country whose imports far exceed its exports, with the additional handicap that foreign investment is a vital necessity for the rapid expansion of industry and agriculture—an expansion without which there can be no hope of survival. There is, too, an additional difficulty in that the Government's Socialist programme tends to discourage the flow of capital from abroad and this factor, in conjunction with the others, has produced an austerity régime where the hardest-hit is the average citizen whose pocket or whose principles forbid excursions on to the black market. Thus food of most descriptions except bread, some fruits and dairy produce, is desperately short and prices correspondingly high. The meat ration of one hundred grammes per week seldom lives up to its name and the housewife is lucky if she does not go more than three months in the year without getting anything out of her butcher. The margarine ration (butter is unobtainable except on the black market) is fairly generous and eggs are about as plentiful as in England, but almost everything else, including potatoes, is very scarce, and even the stand-by of a year ago—frozen fillet of cod, imported—is fast disappearing from the dinner table.

Elsewhere, too, shortages are immediately apparent. If one's car breaks down, one usually has to rely on friends from abroad to send one the spare parts or else, if

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SHOPS AT A MA'ABARA.

one has the cash, one can go to the black market and pay a price far beyond the real value of the part. But the worst shortage of all is in housing. In the towns, it is true, the man with capital behind him can, by laying out a considerable sum in key money, find himself a place to live, and a comfortable place at that; but outside the towns, and especially in the *ma'abarot*, where a large percentage of the new immigrants are to be found, conditions are far from good as I saw for myself when I visited one of them in Galilee.

As it happens, the name *ma'abarot* is a misnomer, the literal translation of it being "transit camps," whereas these camps are in no sense transitory. On the contrary, the intention is to develop the site, using labour provided by the immigrants themselves, into a permanent housing site equipped with its own shops and amenities. In this way the immigrants are provided with jobs which in turn provide them with houses—an ingenious idea which is, unfortunately,

being held up in practice by the shortage of building materials. For example, in the *ma'abara* which I visited some two hundred families have been rehoused in the sparkling white apartment blocks which have been built during the past two years on the rock-studded spur of a hill overlooking the coastal plain. For these people, conditions are good: their apartments are not luxurious, but they are well equipped with all necessities, including electricity and showers, and the rent is low.

For their neighbours still living in the camp itself—and they outnumber the apartment-dwellers by at least ten to one—it is a very different matter. Perhaps the nearest analogy to the life they lead would be that of the shantytown in the old gold-rush days. Their living quarters consist of small wooden-frame huts covered with metal alloy and as one walks through the camp the effect is tinsel—with the sunlight striking brilliantly off the silver-paper walls

and roofs. Here and there in the course of wandering along the baked earth tracks that serve as roads and paths one comes across the narrow groups of buildings that contain the communal showers and the latrines, and in the main street of the camp shops have been set up by the more enterprising inhabitants whose stock-in-trade is set out on trestle tables and old orange boxes—pails, buckets, discarded furniture and so on.

All this would not be so bad if it were only briefly temporary. As it is, however, most of the inhabitants have been living in the camp for a year or even two years and many see no reasonable hope of moving into the permanent houses in the near future. Indeed, the very fact of the stout wooden-built school with which the *ma'abarot* are provided suggests a considerable degree of permanence, while at the same time bearing witness to the great efforts being made by the Government to tackle another problem—the problem of education. Here again, the ideal of the Welfare State, with its programme of a free and comprehensive education for every child in the country up to the age of thirteen, has put a severe strain on an already over-strained internal economy. Even so, the difficulty and expense involved are generally considered to be well worth while if they succeed in welding all the separate groups into a homogeneous whole.

In the meantime, however, the gap between East and West remains and the original fire of some of the Zionist idealists has been somewhat dampened by their experiences during the last four years. As one of them expressed it: "I try to look on the Yemenite as my brother, but he feels like a stranger. . . ." This attitude is understandable enough when one considers that in everything except race and religion—in habits, ways of life,

even in speech—the two are as different as the proverbial chalk from cheese. Indeed, it says a good deal for the Western elements that they have generally refused to take advantage of their intellectually inferior and less cultured "brethren" and that the democratic attitude towards them is a very real, though not always a very natural, thing. It is preserved, moreover, in spite of the fear which some European Jews have that the Eastern element, because of its far higher birth-rate, will eventually swamp the Western element with all that the latter can give in the way of culture and tradition.

Nor is this all: for the Eastern immigrant there has been some disillusionment. Many of them feel that, despite their free passage to Israel and the social services they have been provided with since, they have been sold a pup. They came to Israel to escape present or future persecution, but they also came with the idea that Israel was a land flowing with milk and honey. Whether this idea was encouraged by over-enthusiastic propaganda or not, the fact remains that, as the newcomers soon realized, it conforms very ill with the facts. Even so, because they came in expectation of an easy life, many of them feel disinclined to work hard or even to work at all—a tendency increased, of course, by the feeling of having been "cheated." Unfortunately, such people are not difficult to find and since they form a potential danger to the rest of the community it has been suggested that they should be employed as a cheap labour force (most of them are illiterate or semi-literate and are used to a very low standard of life) to hasten industrial and agricultural development and ease the economic load generally. But this the authorities have consistently refused to allow and in the meantime the strain continues.

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Finally, there is the political problem. The most striking political feature in Israel is the number of parties (there are seventeen of them) that manage to survive in a country with so small a population. It is also one of the greatest of the country's handicaps since it means that a clear majority is out of the question and that a coalition is inevitable; and in Israel, where stable government is essential to rapid development and all-out effort, a coalition is, at best, an uneasy makeshift. But Mr. Ben Gurion has succeeded where many others might have failed and the outcome is not so unsatisfactory as it might have been in less able hands. Briefly, until December of last year the Government consisted of a coalition between Mapai, the moderate Socialist party and two of the religious parties, while the opposition was led by the extreme Socialists (Mapam), with the General Zionists a close second. In this set-up a frequent complaint was that the religious parties, whose support was essential to Mapai, had attained an importance far greater than their minority backing among the electorate could justify. The present coalition between Mapai and the General Zionists has, of course, deprived these religious parties of their former advantages as partners in the Government, but it is still too early to say whether there will be a relaxation of the laws for which they were largely responsible and which many people consider to be not only irksome but actually wasteful.

For example, all forms of public transport, apart from taxis (which are expensive), have to stop completely on the Sabbath except in Haifa where a skeleton bus service is allowed to keep running—a restriction which is more crippling than might at first sight appear, because the Sabbath actually begins on Friday evening and not on Saturday morning as might be sup-

posed. Again, no pigs or rabbits, both of which are forbidden to the Jews by the Mosaic Laws, are allowed to be kept and a valuable source of food is thus lost to the country. Also restrictive is the law forbidding any meat that has not been "kosher" slaughtered to be sold in the shops, since it prohibits the import of meat from all those countries which do not use the kosher method of slaughtering. Unfortunately for Israel, these are many.

But dissension does not stop here. Over the far more important question of the Arab peace, opinion is divided. The extreme right-wing Party, Herut, argues that the war should be renewed and the Arabs driven out of their part of Palestine: others, the majority, consider that a speedy peace is essential so that Israel may develop her natural markets in the East and at the same time be relieved of the expense of supporting a vast standing army. In sober fact, however, the most likely prospect seems to be a continuation of the present uneasy armistice with its border incidents and daily press reports of frontier clashes with bands of infiltrators.

So much, then, for Israel's problems. They are all problems which arise naturally from the extraordinary concatenation of events that led to the establishment and composition of the new State and one can know about them without ever having set foot inside the country itself. But what is impossible from the outside is to gauge the spirit with which they are being tackled. It is the same spirit which enabled a badly equipped and seriously outnumbered army to defeat its opponents in a matter of weeks, and as an example of it there is the work that has been done and is now being done in the Negev. For years, this vast sweep of desert and semi-desert in the south was of immense significance to the Zionist ideal. For one thing the soil, though badly

eroded and neglected for centuries, is basically fertile, needing only irrigation and care to make it fruitful. For another, the Negev contains sources of minerals so far unexplored to any great extent, though mining of copper ore in the far South has already begun and has developed rapidly during the past two years. Immediately on the setting up of the State, work began on the northern section and progress has gone ahead at a tremendous rate. Millions of trees have been planted where before it was rare to find the odd shrub, and thousands of kilometres of pipelines have been laid connecting the section to the pumping stations at Nir'am and Gevar'am: soon, the irrigation of the southern section, south of Beersheba, will be well under way. As a result of

this, the Negev produced a bumper crop this year, fully justifying the labour and devotion expended on it.

But this is only one example; there are many others, among them the rapid development of light industries, such as the manufacture of chocolate, textiles and plastics round Tel-Aviv, and of heavy industry in the Haifa area. In short, Israel is determined to survive and though there are some who grumble and complain and even end up by re-emigrating to other countries, the majority are prepared to stand by the new State however hard the life may be and however bad conditions may become. As long as this is the case, the battle for existence is half way to being won.

K. KEITH-JOPP.

EISENHOWER AND THE DOLLAR GAP

By DENYS SMITH

THERE are several reasons for believing that the visit of Mr. Eden and Mr. Butler to Washington will produce useful results. The sights have not been set too high. There is to be "an informal and exploratory exchange of views on matters discussed at the recent Commonwealth Conference." Britain can now show that the problem of the dollar gap is not insoluble; in fact, the sterling area has climbed back into balance with the dollar area. The gap is now between what is a desirable level for that balance and what has so far proved the attainable level. Finally, the President promised in his State of the Union

message that the United States would help Europe to improve its economic situation. In view of the strong protectionist sentiment within the Republican Party, the President's recognition of "the importance of profitable and equitable trade" was reassuring. He had, it is true, to take note of public weariness with problems which appear perpetual, like Europe's economic weakness. In all such cases the public tendency is to blame others for not matching American efforts to bring about a solution, and the remedy is to insist that further American efforts be made dependent upon increased efforts by others. Mr. Dulles, therefore,

bluntly announces that unless Europe shows signs of meeting its defence commitments before April American aid programmes will be revised. Mr. Eisenhower prefaces his promise of helping to increase trade with a brief homily: "We can hope that our friends will take the initiative in creating broader markets and more dependable currencies to allow greater exchange of goods and services among themselves." Mr. Eisenhower was here echoing, or rather taking note of, the common American contention that European goods can compete with American goods only if they are brought down in price by being mass-produced to fill a wide European market. European action, said Mr. Eisenhower, "will invite vital help from us." In other words, American jam will be provided if Europe is ready to swallow the powder. American help was divided into four categories: simplifying and possibly reducing tariffs and other trade obstacles, encouraging the flow of American investment abroad, buying defence materials abroad with dollars (off-shore procurement), and importing raw materials.

American importers have grown grey and lawyers rich picking their way through the tangled underbrush of American tariff regulations. A Customs Simplification Act was passed by the House of Representatives in October, 1951, but it never reached the Senate floor. Treasury officials are now at work drafting a new Bill. There are difficulties over classification and over valuation. A British exporter, for example, sent along a consignment of mackintoshes and then found that a rubber band to give a better fit round the waist led to their classification as "braided elastic" instead of rain-coats. The higher duty made the whole transaction unprofitable. There are 83,000 classification cases pending in

the Customs Courts and there are in addition about 63,000 valuation cases. One reason for the confusion is that the classifications of the 1930 Smoot-Hawley Act are still in force. If some article was not in existence 22 years ago it pays the duty on the article it most nearly resembles. Nylon, for example, pays either the woollen or the silk tariff; it all depends on how rough its surface appears. The Treasury told its customs inspectors two years ago that it was not their task to find ways to keep foreign goods out of the market, but many of them still act as if it were, and lack of clear definition helps them.

Eisenhower also asked for an extension of the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act, which expires on June 30. Many big export industries are interested in lower tariffs and increased foreign trade. One is the motor industry, strongly represented in the new Administration. About 20 per cent. of all tractors, 15 per cent. of all lorries and 10 per cent. of all agricultural machinery are exported. The Chamber of Commerce of Detroit, the centre of the motor industry, went so far as to suggest that all tariffs should be abolished. Farmers, too, like low tariffs, except dairy farmers. The American domestic market cannot absorb all the wheat, cotton and tobacco grown. Eisenhower can also count on Democratic support to offset defections in the Republican Party.

Mr. Truman's Secretary of Commerce, Mr. Sawyer, reported after a six weeks' tour of Europe last December that tariffs should be lowered and customs procedures simplified. But he pointed out that this would merely provide the opportunity for trade. Europe would have to make use of its improved opportunity by making "more goods at lower prices." Workers must be more productive, management

more efficient, and more attention must be paid to salesmanship. Foreign advertising can, incidentally, do far more than push the sales of a product. In 1951 Congress imposed a quota on imported cheese. The result was not only an increase in the price of foreign cheese, but of American cheese as well. The cheese importers and the Swiss cheese industry placed advertisements appealing directly to the public. "Don't blame your grocer," one was headed. It went on to explain, in discreet terms, why Congress was to blame. Another showed a slice of cheese with the old low price crossed out and replaced by a higher price. It was headed, "This hurts us both." The text provided an elementary lesson in economics and closed with the suggestion that the consuming public should write to their Senator or Representative about it. "Public relations" advertising is carried out most successfully by the Natural Rubber Bureau financed by the Malayan rubber industry, and might well be adopted by other groups of exporters.

The new Under-Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Marion Folsom, like Mr. Sawyer, made a tour of Europe at the end of last year. His conclusions were much the same. The old pattern of world trade has been dislocated by the War, by Communist expansion, by attempts of raw materials countries to industrialize, and "the increasing relative efficiency and self-sufficiency of the United States." Europe could not turn back the clock, but it could at least do something about matching America's efficiency and low production costs.

The danger is that if Europe does this it will merely stir up a hornet's nest of special interests clamouring for increased protection. It would be wrong to suppose that American concern over the effects of increased foreign competition is entirely selfish. In-

vestors have been induced to put their money in a protected firm in good faith, and many workers depend for employment on a protected industry. What is wrong is the way in which legitimate complaints, and some not so legitimate, are met. Any single American producer who thinks he is being harmed by increased foreign competition has the legal right to complain to the Tariff Commission. The foreign exporter is put to the expense of defending his case and exposed to a year's uncertainty while it is being considered. It almost appears as though any tariff concession granted under the Trade Agreements Act which proves useful is the very one which cannot be continued. The opportunity is given for the foreign exporter to sell more goods provided he does not make full use of it. The line of least resistance is to solve the matter by cancelling the concession. But the United States Government has made the bargain. It should therefore assume responsibility for dealing with its consequences. Fortunately this is being recognized more and more and plans are being examined for providing conversion and expansion loans to a company which can prove itself in serious difficulties owing to foreign competition, as an alternative to ending that competition.

The second kind of help Mr. Eisenhower suggested America could provide is increased private investment abroad. Superficially this only postpones the day of reckoning, for the country in which the investment is made must earn more dollars through export trade to meet future interest payments on the investment. But actually increased investment, by enabling foreign industries to modernize, should increase the possibilities of making sales abroad at lower competitive prices and so make the dollar-earning problem easier.

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American foreign investment set a new record last year, but in the wrong places. The largest proportion went into the petroleum industry and Latin America.

The former Secretary of Commerce, Mr. Sawyer, pointed out that one cannot "talk investment into going abroad." If there are opportunities for profit it will flow freely enough. The greatest deterrent, American officials believe, is uncertainty about when and whether earnings can be transferred and capital repatriated. For that reason the British Government's decision to allow not only the original capital invested, but the improved capital value, to be repatriated is welcomed. There is also a reluctance to invest in countries where nationalization may end the possibility of profit and where taxation is high. Moreover, owing to the Cold War, any investment beyond the oceans looks a bit risky. Official American opinion is divided on the wisdom of Government guarantees for private investment. Some hold that they only encourage the foreign abuses which they are designed to alleviate. If a nation can attract American investment because of the guarantee it will have no incentive to make domestic changes which would attract it. Mr. Folsom, however, believes that "extension of United States guarantees against unusual exchange and political risks would be helpful." In his view "the lack of capital is probably the principal cause of the failure of industry to develop markets for some of the new products and processes invented in recent years by the British. London is no longer able to meet the demands for long-term capital for either the domestic or sterling area countries." Privately many Americans are convinced that the crushing load of British taxation is responsible for the shortage of British investment capital. In trying to take care of the people's welfare, the

policies of the Government have harmed it by stifling increased production at low prices.

The third category of help proposed by Mr. Eisenhower was off-shore procurement. This, like increased investment, is a method of buying time. It defers the day of reckoning by providing extra-curricular dollars. It has some permanent value, for it expands the capital goods industries in Britain and Europe. It also makes amends for the fact that the arms industry uses up steel which would have gone into engineering and other products which constitute Britain's most hopeful line of dollar-earning exports. An outstanding example of off-shore procurement is the \$90 million order for 500 Centurian heavy tanks for Holland and Denmark, which gives extra work for 107 different British concerns. Weapons can be produced in Europe more cheaply than in the United States. Once made they do not have to be shipped across the Atlantic. Off-shore procurement is good economics, but it might not always be good politics. American manufacturers might feel that they were losing contracts to foreign firms, though at present, since the uniformed Oliver Twists on both sides of the Atlantic are always asking for more, they have enough to keep them busy.

The last form of American help suggested by Mr. Eisenhower was importing "greater amounts of raw materials which we do not ourselves possess in adequate quantities." This falls short of an endorsement of the Commonwealth Conference agreement "to co-operate in considering, commodity by commodity, international schemes designed to assure stability of demand and prices at an economical level." Commodity agreements are disliked and distrusted in the United States. Producers, it is argued, become more

interested in high prices and Government subsidies than in efficient production. The Paley Commission's report pointed out that, as time went on, America would be less and less self-contained. It suggested price stability would encourage investment, and so enable more raw materials to be produced. But it will take more than one report to counteract the American political prejudice against cartels.

The President did not mention several forms of help which have been discussed unofficially. One is the repeal of various "Buy American" Acts. These, however, can be softened by executive interpretation, while off-shore procurement, the very opposite of a "Buy American" policy, balances some of the harm they do. Another is a stabilization loan. Congress has been scared by unofficial foreign suggestions that to be of any use such a loan would have to be in the region of \$30,000 million. The purpose of the loan would be to hasten the day when the pound was freely convertible. It would mean that Britain and other countries would not have to build up such large gold and dollar reserves. A painless way to increase reserves would be to increase the price of gold. Rumours of a possible increase in the American Treasury gold price of \$35 an ounce have cropped up with monotonous regularity since the War. They were taken more seriously than usual during the recent Commonwealth Conference. A statement supporting an increase was anticipated in many quarters in the final communiqué. Some foreign central banks took the precaution of converting part of their dollar balance into gold, so that the American gold stocks dropped \$150 million in the latter half of December. The simplified foreign argument in favour of increasing the price of gold is that the price of everything else has

risen since the War, so why not gold? The simplified American answer is that gold is the measure of other commodities. The fact that everything you measure has grown longer is no reason for stretching your yard-rule.

The National City Bank made some interesting calculations recently on the effect of a 50 per cent. increase in gold prices. The increased value of gold stocks held by the sterling area would only be about \$1,000 million. France, Italy and other countries would gain little, certainly less than they receive annually through American economic aid. The sterling area might expect to benefit, because gold production would be stimulated. Assuming it reached the peak attained in 1940, then output could reach an annual rate of £1,600 million, \$800 million over the present annual rate. About 60 per cent. of the world's gold production is in the sterling area, principally in South Africa. But to get this increased revenue for the sterling area Britain would have to supply South Africa with goods it needed. One-third of the gold output comes from countries with free currencies—Canada, the United States and Latin America. Continental Europe would not benefit at all. Finally, one of the principal beneficiaries would be Soviet Russia. Another argument is that a higher price for gold would shake loose hoarded stores. The reply to this is that the most effective way of coaxing gold out of hiding lies in making it clear that the present price will be permanent and that there is no advantage to be gained by hanging on to it. As for the argument that "there is not enough gold to go round," it is contended that so long as there are chronic one-sided trade balances there will never be enough gold to go round. Once there is no such chronic disequilibrium, then large gold reserves will not be needed. The United States,

TOWARDS THE PERFECT STRAWBERRY

which would theoretically benefit most from an increased gold price, is not in fact at all keen on the idea. In 1934, when the price of gold was increased and the dollar devalued, commodity prices were low and millions unemployed. To-day the situation is just the reverse. Moreover, this 1934 gold increase is intimately associated with the policy of the defeated Democratic Party. We now have a Republican Administration committed to a sound and orthodox monetary policy.

For the past five years the gap between the world's dollar earnings and its dollar spending has been covered by gifts or loans of dollars from the United States. Both Americans and Europeans have grown tired of this and can meet on common ground in seeking to end it. There are pessimists who say it cannot be done. The economists have dived into a sea of speculative estimates and come up with the startling conclusion that if the magic wand was waved and all American tariffs vanished the increased foreign goods Americans would buy would only amount to \$1,000 million. The problem of the dollar gap would only be one-fifth solved, for the annual deficit has been between \$5,000 and \$6,000 million. A

more optimistic conclusion is that the real gap is smaller than it appears and of a manageable size. The American export total includes about \$2,000 million in military "hardware," for which no payment is made and which will not be a normal condition. It also leaves out on the credit side remittances sent home by Italian and other immigrants, which amount to about \$500 million annually. Since these are capital transfers, they are not shown in the trade statistics, but they contribute annually to the dollars available. Hence a moderate rise in American tourist expenditures and imports and a moderate increase in American investments, combined with off-shore purchases, could close the gap in next to no time. A balance between America and the outside world does not, of course, imply a balance for each individual country. At the moment Britain is in a better position than other countries. If all currencies were convertible this would matter little. One of the most encouraging features of the Commonwealth Conference, from the American point of view, was the decision to move towards convertibility by progressive stages.

DENYS SMITH.

TOWARDS THE PERFECT STRAWBERRY

By EDWARD HYAMS

A NUMBER of species of *Fragaria* are native and widely distributed in Europe, including Britain, yet the garden strawberry as we know it is not much more than a century old, and it was unknown to the ancients. One or more *Fragariae* were

used by Greek and Latin herbalists as medicinal herbs, but the insignificant berry was ignored by them. Indeed there is some reason to think that neither of these peoples was particularly zealous or enterprising in the domestication of wild plants, and that

what they did not receive from the Asiatic cultures, they went without. The date-palm is perhaps the first fruit tree cultivated by man; the antiquity of the cultivated grape-vine is so great that the origin of viticulture probably antedates that of cericulture; the fig and the olive, both native to south-east Europe, were, nevertheless introduced from the east as economic plants. But the strawberry is not found in the hot climates of the Old World, and thus, although at least four species of strawberry were native to the woods and hills throughout the region of Hellenic culture in the temperate zone, no attempt was made to domesticate this plant until the west Europeans, probably the French, of the fourteenth century took it in hand.

A figure of the strawberry as a garden plant appears in the Mainz *Herbarium* (1454). Thereafter drawings and descriptions, as well as references in works on horticulture, become more common. The practice of the fifteenth century gardeners was to dig up wild strawberry plants, set them in borders, and there, by cultivation, and perhaps by selection, to improve the size of the fruit. The strawberry, by making runners along which cadet plants complete with roots are formed at intervals, suggests to the gardener the obvious method of vegetative propagation (*F. eflagellis* is exceptional) and it seems probable that by the selection of the best cadets from the best parent plants, which would entail the occasional unwitting selection of a bud mutant, the quality, size and yield of fruit may have been improved. Yet the improvement, during the first three centuries of cultivation, must have been either inconsiderable, or unstable, for even late in the seventeenth century excellent horticultural text-books invite the reader to procure his strawberry stocks from the nearest woods.

In following this advice the gardener was not confined to the commonest species, *F. vesca*. He might, for example, find the larger-fruited and highly flavoured *F. moschata*, as I have done in Hampshire, from which was developed the variety, or complex of varieties, called *Hautbois*. For more than a century these musk or pineapple flavoured strawberries were considered the best, and it will be recalled that they were so voted by all the guests at Mr. Knightly's strawberry-picking party in Jane Austen's *Emma*. What other strawberries were to be found in Mr. Knightly's fruit borders? Improvements upon the wild *F. Vesca*; possibly cultivated varieties of *F. eflagellis* or its hybrids (although Le Baudé did not produce *Gaillon* until 1824), that is the runnerless strawberries; probably, by that time, *F. Virginiana*, which I have gathered in great quantities in Virginia and which is larger than any wild European strawberry; and, just possibly, *F. Chilensis*.

But before coming to these American introductions there was at least one other important case of domestication in Europe. Either *F. collina*, or a mountain strain of *F. vesca*, was brought into the garden, chiefly for its habit of bearing fruit not during a brief season, but during four months, that is from June until October. Such is the origin of our Alpine or *Quatre Saisons* varieties, which show a marked improvement upon the species.

Introductions of the American species no doubt began in the seventeenth century and perhaps earlier. It might be supposed that crossing with European varieties would immediately have followed, but there existed a genetical difficulty no less great for being quite unsuspected by the gardeners of that epoch. This difficulty, as will appear, has given rise to something of a mystery: its nature is as

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follows. All the Old World *Fragaria* are diploid plants. But *F. Virginiana* and *F. Chilensis* are octoploids. It follows, according to genetical authority, that the European and American species are intersterile. Yet it remains true that there appears to have been some crossing, whether through the occurrence of octoploid individuals of *F. vesca* and *F. moschata* as sports, or from some other cause, is obscure. However, at first, *F. Virginiana* would have been improved only by selection.

Of the other American species the most important, as it is the principal derivation of the modern garden strawberries, was *F. Chilensis*, noticed for its relatively enormous fruit by a French naval officer named, oddly enough, Frézier, in the gardens of Chile, and brought by him to France about 1800 or a little earlier, for the botanist Duchesne was working with them just before the Revolution. We do not know how long these strawberries had been in cultivation, but it is worth remembering that Chile was formerly part of the *Tahua-ntin-suyu*, the vast empire of the Inca princes, whose people were perhaps the most brilliant horticultural workers of all time: to them we owe the potato, maize, many beans, the tomato and cocaine, as well as quinine. Perhaps we also owe them the large-fruited strawberries.

Duchesne crossed the two American species and he also seems to have contrived to get fertile seed from *F. Chilensis* with pollen of *F. moschata*, for his early hybrids include the pineapple, that is musk-flavoured, *Ananas* variety. By the end of the eighteenth century, at all events, the opening up of America and the relative ease of communications had brought together in Europe the material required by the gardener and the practical botanist for the creation, by crossing and selection, of the garden strawberry as we know it. Duchesne's

work was aborted by the Revolution and the task of making the new strawberry passed to England where, characteristically, it fell into the hands not of scientists like Duchesne, but of practical gardeners and nurserymen, empiricists like Keen, Knight and others who worked without plan but produced varieties superior to any yet bred; and later of Thomas Laxton, whose far more systematic work was rewarded, about 1890, with *Royal Sovereign*. The fruit of this variety, quite apart from its superior flavour, was two or three times as large as that of any pre-*Chilensis* variety.

Or, at least, this seems to have been the case, yet perhaps analysis of some modern varieties by repeated inbreeding would reveal some surprises. I have assumed that the attribute *size of fruit* in modern varieties is always derived from *Chilensis*, but strawberry plants, like others, are subject to bud and chromosome mutations and there may have occurred large-fruited mutants among the European varieties. Greatly increased size is sometimes one of the attributes of polyploidy. Moreover, when men interfere with nature and bring within reach of each other species in a genus, changes are liable to happen: a character in a seedling may transcend, in certain genetical conditions, the same character in both parents.

Creative gardeners usually have in mind as their aim the production of a "perfect" fruit of the kind with which they are working. Such a fruit must, of course, include and transcend all the attributes found within the genus. Laxton, and some of his predecessors, had in fact transcended, in such varieties as *Royal Sovereign*, all the attributes of the species with which they worked with the exception of fragrance, which remains at its best in the wild fruit. But within the genus there was one attribute which they had

not included: the long fruiting season of the Alpine varieties. Nevertheless, the English gardeners now rested and the initiative passed to the French.

That the production of large-fruited strawberries was an English success was commemorated in France by the fact that these now commonplace but then very remarkable plants became known as *fraises anglaises*. They were adopted enthusiastically into French gardens, but the French, more accustomed to the four-month fruiting season of the Alpines, determined to lengthen the fruiting season of the *fraises anglaises*. The leader in this work was the parish priest of Chenoves, the Abbé Thivolet, who had long been trying to cross an Alpine with a *fraises anglaises* variety.

Now we arrive at a most curious circumstance: knowing nothing whatever of genetics, a science yet to be born, the Abbé Thivolet and his contemporaries could not know that they were proposing to themselves an "impossibility," the production of fertile seed from a diploid-octoploid cross. The odd thing is that Thivolet appears to have succeeded. At all events he did pollinate one of the *fraises anglaises* varieties with the pollen of an Alpine variety, and one of the seeds did germinate, and the seedling did manifest attributes of both supposed parents: subsequently named *St. Joseph*, it bore the large fruit of an English strawberry, but it bore them during not one month, but four, from June until October. This was in 1825, so that the English parent was probably one of Keen's varieties; *Keen's Seedling* came into commerce in 1821.

Either the Abbé Thivolet did in fact exactly what he supposed himself to have done, or he was favoured by an extraordinary chance. The seedling *St. Joseph* which seemed to owe its attributes to its parents, may in fact have owed them to mutation, and the

fertility of the seed planted by the Abbé may have been due to his carelessness in protecting the pistillate parent from alien pollen, or in removing its own stamens too late.

As to the chance that *St. Joseph* was a mutant: in 1898 a New York farmer named Cooper noticed in a field of *Bismarck* strawberries a single plant with runner cadets, all in flower, the date being September 28. Cooper dug up and replanted these freaks, and the attribute of flowering twice a season proved stable. The plants were the origin of a clonal variety called *Pan-American*. But the same thing has happened several times and in several places. In fact, probably any strawberry variety may give rise to long-season mutants.

St. Joseph became the ancestor of a family of perpetual-fruiting varieties—*St. Antoine*, still excellent. *Suavis*, *Merveille de France*, Vilmorin's *St. Fiacre* and many more. But whether the perpetual-fruiting quality was invariably due to a *St. Joseph* gene seems to me very doubtful. In the first place the habit of bearing later and later is not identical in all the numerous modern varieties of perpetuals. It can be due to *St. Joseph* genes; it can be due to a long continued process of selection for late bearing; and it can be due to mutation.

The French distinguish these varieties from the long-season small-fruited Alpine varieties by calling them *fraisiers à gros fruits remontants*, and since *remontant* is a convenient word by which to describe the habit of continuous flowering, I will borrow it. Varieties, then, either have this *remontant* habit consistently, producing fruit without pause and copiously from June until November; or they have several fruiting seasons, separated by periods of rest, flowering, for example, in May, again in August, again in October.

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And one or other of these habits sometimes manifests itself in varieties not "intended" to be *remontant*: I have seen *Royal Sovereign* flower twice in a season; and *Auchincruive Climax* nearly always produces an autumn crop, and can be grown so as to flower five times in a season. Nevertheless, the advantages of this habit have been ignored even by such admirable English plant-breeders as Mr. Boyes, of Cambridge seedlings fame.

It is singular that the more successful the French were in improving *remontant* varieties, the less the English knew about them. Early in this century Vilmorin's *St. Fiacre* was not uncommonly found in English gardens; yet to-day the numerous greatly superior varieties of France, Austria, Germany and the United States are virtually unknown here. But this lamentable ignorance is ending, and trials of something like a hundred *remontant* varieties have been carried out in Devonshire by Major Douglas Corner.

As to the qualities of the new *remontants*, I must be brief. The best of them give a continuous and copious supply of first quality strawberries from June until October and, with the aid of glass, well into November. With the aid of

heat cropping will continue through the winter: Major Corner and myself both had ripe fruit at Christmas, and flowering continues into January and February.

At what point in our advance on the strawberry front are we nearest to the "perfect" strawberry? The plant must be robust, the fruit large, shapely and plentiful, the season of bearing must be at least four months, and runner-production should be adequate. Moreover, since it has always been held that the musk or pine flavour is the most delicious of variants on the strawberry flavour, the perfect strawberry should be a musk strawberry. M. Charles Simmen's *Géant Framboisé* bred at the Montmorency nurseries, tried for ten years in secret, and entering commerce this year, comes nearest to this ideal. It falls short in producing insufficient runners. Let us hope that some English plant breeder working with this wonderful variety, and perhaps with the American *Red Rich*, notable for runner production, the Scottish *Auchincruive Climax*, and the French *La Sans Rivale* remarkable for its enormous crop, will produce an English *remontant* still nearer to strawberry perfection.

EDWARD HYAMS.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

THE following extract is from an article in the March 1903 number of *The National Review* entitled "Lament of an Oxford Tory." The author was Sir Edward Cadogan, then an undergraduate at Balliol, and since distinguished in many branches of the public service. His words were interesting and prophetic.

... animosity against the present Government has been so systematically fomented that at the present time the general feeling that filters through the University from day to day is that the sooner the Ministry meets with defeat the better for the country at large. Such sentiments meet with no check in Oxford because there the Tories meet with no encouragement. There is not a single

Conservative Club in Oxford which is supported either by great numbers or by any enthusiasm. The Union Society, the world-famous debating club that has witnessed the maiden efforts of our greatest statesmen, is naturally imbued with the modern spirit which has lately sprung into existence. This Society recently witnessed a debate upon a motion which savoured rather of Hyde Park Socialism than of the deliberations of a respectable University assembly. The disgraceful wording of the motion was "That circumstances in connection with this Coronation favour a Republic." A loyal undergraduate on reading the notice of debate hastened back from some neighbouring locality where he had been serving his country to the best of his ability on Volunteer manoeuvres, entered the debating hall still garbed in His Majesty's uniform, and in words enthusiastic although halting denounced such a breach of the past traditions of the Society. These traditions were evidently obsolete, for when he called upon all those who discountenanced the proceedings to leave the hall, a few wretched individuals with the extreme of embarrassment depicted on their features retired discomfited. It must be admitted that there were no irreverent or revolutionary speeches uttered that night, contrary to expectation. It was hurriedly explained that the motion was only to be treated in a light-hearted manner—it was, in fact, merely to be a joke, but the speeches on the subject were of such an inferior character that the audience was left with the conviction that such debates are of a dangerous nature and that those who can only be funny in such wise had better not be funny at all. Yet even passing thus lightly over this episode in Oxford political life, it serves as a clue to the general trend of feeling. . . .

Mr. Balfour may not take into

account the opinions of the University. Possibly he may think it is not worth the railway fare from Paddington to Oxford to send speakers who will raise a counterblast against the Liberal Leaguers, the Pro-Boers, and other sections of the Opposition who are busy every day in the University striving with too much success to wean Tories from their former stern, unbending principles. If this be the case he is wrong, and the future will prove it. A new political generation is arising which will swamp the old order of things unless resistance is given in the right quarters, and it is in the Universities where every influence should be brought to bear if the balance of parties is to be kept going. At present the preponderance is overwhelmingly on the Opposition side among leading undergraduates, and we can only come to the conclusion that it is because the Opposition leaders have turned their attention to Oxford, whereas those of the Government have displayed astonishing indifference. This coming generation may only now be in embryo, but it is gaining in strength and vigour, and those who pride themselves that the present Government will never meet with effectual opposition will discover that the day is not far distant when it will encounter considerably superior forces.

Those forces were indeed encountered two years later, when Balfour's Tory Government was swept out of power. The atmosphere which Sir Edward describes is curiously reminiscent of that which preceded another great Tory *débâcle*—that of 1945. The moral is that Tory statesmen must never neglect the academic community and must never allow disillusionment or false theory to take hold of the rising generation.

BOOKS NEW AND OLD

SPRING ENTRY *

By ERIC GILLET

THE lean years of English poetry have been so long and so many that it is a delight to welcome a work of the highest distinction, Mr. Cecil Day Lewis's *An Italian Visit*. It has had a good press but it is amusing to note that several of the more mature critics have acclaimed it almost with a sigh of relief. It seems to be their view that the dangerous and sometimes erratic experimenter of the 'Thirties is now safely home in the fold of the Traditionalists. If they mean by this that *An Italian Visit* is mature, beautiful, intelligible, rich in thought and meaning, and couched in the poet's individual idiom, they are right. If they suggest, as at least one has seemed to do, that this is an accomplished poetical exercise by the holder of the Chair of Poetry in the University of Oxford, and nothing more, they are well off target.

An Italian Visit is exciting and unusual. It is in seven parts and occupies sixty-four pages. The publisher, in a really admirable "blurb" compares it to a suite in music: "The poet has used his first impressions of the country to illustrate certain deeper themes indicated by the epigraph '... an Italian visit is a voyage of discovery, not only of scenes and cities, but also of the latent faculties of the traveller's heart and mind.'"

The first and last sections contain the comments, anticipatory and retrospective, of "three persons in one man, bound for the Eternal City." Tom intends only to enjoy himself. Dick has a decadent craving for perfection at any price. Harry has a conscience which bids him "take the round world to

pieces and ticket each stone for the use of a possibly grateful posterity." *Flight to Italy* is the finest account of man's conquest of the air that poetry has given us:

Now radiant

All around the airscrew's boring
penumbra

The clouds redouble, as nearer we climb,
Their toppling fantasy. We skirt the
fringe of icebergs,

Dive under eiderdowns, disport with
snowmen

On fields of melting snow dinted by the
wind's feet,

Gleefully brush past atom-bomb cauli-
flowers,

Frozen fuffs of spray from naval gunfire.
Wool-gathering we fly through a
world of make-believe.

The poem cries out for quotation if only to show the poet's mastery of metre, the beauty and variety of the imagery. The sections, "A Letter from Rome," "Bus to Florence," and "Florence: Works of Art" are most effectively contrasted. There are brilliant pastiches in the manner of various contemporaries. The heart of the poem,

* *An Italian Visit*. By C. Day Lewis. Cape. 7s. 6d.

The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft. By George Gissing. With an Introduction by Cecil Chisholm. Phoenix House. 9s. 6d.

Macaulay, Prose and Poetry. Selected by G. M. Young. The Reynard Library. Hart-Davis. 26s.

The Letters of Samuel Johnson, with Mrs. Thrale's Genuine Letters to Him. Collected and Edited by R. W. Chapman. 3 vols. Geoffrey Cumberlege. O. U. P. £6 6s.

Apulian Summer and Other Episodes. Essays by Michael Lloyd. Heinemann. 15s.

Pleasures Strange and Simple. By William Sansom. Hogarth Press. 12s. 6d.

and, in my opinion, the best thing Mr. Day Lewis has ever done, is the lovely *Elegy Before Death: At Settignano*. There is a tenderness here, a dying fall, that he has never achieved before. It is hardly fair to pluck a piece from its context, but I must do so to justify what I have written:

Once on a living night
When cypresses jetted like fountains of
wine-warm air
Bubbling with fireflies, we going outside
In the palpitating dark to admire them,
One of the fireflies pinned itself to her
hair;
And its throbbings, I thought, had a
tenderer light
As if some glimmering of love inspired
them,
As if her luminous heart was beating
there.

Ah, could I make you see this subtle
ghost of mine,
Delicate as a whorled shell that whispers
to the tide,
Moving with a wavering watersilk grace,
Anemone-fingered, coral-tinted, under
whose crystalline
Calm such naiads, angel fish and
monsters sleep or slide;
If you could see her as she flows to me
apace
Through waves through walls through
time's fine mesh magically drawn,
You would say, this was surely the last
daughter of the foam-born,
One whom no age to come will ever
replace.

The selectors to the Chair of Poetry at Oxford have often, and with reason been reproached for choosing a "safe" or drab nonentity as Professor. If anybody has had the slightest doubt about Mr. Day Lewis's ability to practice what he professes so eloquently and vigorously in his lectures, *An Italian Visit* should be convincing proof that its author is a poet in the full and splendid exercise of his powers.



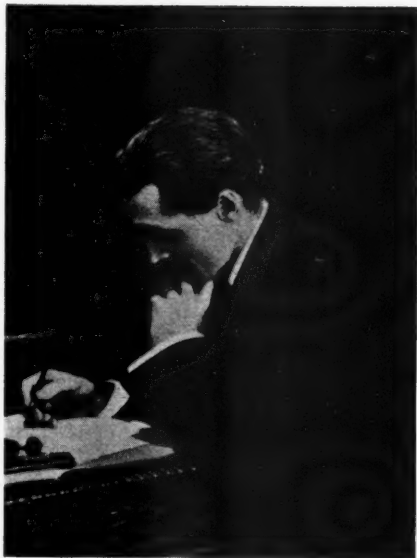
C. DAY LEWIS.

Fourteen years ago there was published the twenty-third edition of George Gissing's celebrated *Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft*. In thirty-six years sixty-four thousand copies of the book were sold, and now, fourteen years later, a new publisher prints it again on the fiftieth anniversary of the author's death. I wish that the useful subject index had not been omitted, but as compensation for its loss there is a useful Foreword by Mr. Cecil Chisholm, recalling how that enthusiastic bookman, T. P. O'Connor, strolled into the office of his popular paper, *T.P.'s Weekly*, fifty years ago in his habitual search for petty cash, and picked up a copy of the book, which had just come in for review. "That man Gissing isn't popular, but he can be," O'Connor remarked, "I'll take this along and look at it." He fell in love with it at once,

and wrote a series of front-page articles that put Gissing on the literary map. It was a timely gesture to one of the most charming and companionable of books. Too many readers have thought that "Henry Ryecroft" was only a piece of thinly veiled autobiography. It is much more than that. Gissing wrote it with art-concealing art. He projected himself, at forty-three, ten years forward into time, and before he died he became almost what he pictured Ryecroft to be. This is a most adroit and agreeable portrait. The retired, struggling author, who suddenly and unexpectedly finds himself in possession of a modest income and retires to a cottage near Exeter, radiates quiet contentment. He writes happily about books and the countryside, above all he congratulates himself again and again on the joy of being alone, without responsibilities. It is worth noting that to the end of his life Gissing had to support six people. I cannot remember how often I have read this minor classic. I only know that after all these years it pleases me as much as ever it did. Mr. Chisholm should correct, in the next edition, his statement that "Ryecroft has not been reprinted for over twenty years," and I hope that he will be called upon to do so very soon.

The books in the Reynard Library are a joy to handle and read. The format is charming, the print admirable, and the editing of these excellent selections clear and scholarly. *Macaulay* lends himself well to Mr. G. M. Young's purpose. There are passages from the *History of England*, essays (I should like to have had more of them), speeches, poems, and a paper, now first published—Macaulay's note of the proceedings when Edward Oxford was examined by the Privy Council after his attempt on the life of Queen Victoria.

What admirable prose Macaulay wrote! There is a clarion-ring about it,



GEORGE GISSING, MAY 1901.

(Elliott & Fry.)

the clear, bright call of a silver trumpet. There are times when you feel that he wanted to force his readers' acquiescence, to browbeat them into silent consent. Lytton Strachey once called him "the Philistine on Parnassus." It was unfair. It would be even more misleading to speak of him as a cosh boy of literature but the hint of the bludgeon is there, and we have lived through so much violence in our own time that it is possible we resent the shadow of it that hangs over Macaulay's writing. The test is in the reading, and as I opened this selection at random I found myself compelled—not bludgeoned—to read on. The rhythm, the colour, and the natural vigour of Macaulay's prose demand it. There is great writing here on splendid themes. This should be one of the most popular books in the Reynard Library.

Future historians and students will have every reason to bless the name of Dr. R. W. Chapman for the clearheaded

editorial and expository work he has done for Jane Austen and Dr. Johnson. His new edition of Jane Austen's letters is now followed by a new edition of *The Letters of Samuel Johnson, with Mrs. Thrale's Genuine Letters to Him*, ranging from 1719 to 1874. These three handsome books will be indispensable to all students of Johnsoniana. They include about four hundred and seventy letters never published before, also all the letters in *Boswell*, and seven elaborate indexes, "many parts of which," the publisher modestly hopes, "may be found readable." Of course they are, and they are crammed full of relevant information. Dr. Johnson once remarked "It is now become so much the fashion to publish letters, that in order to avoid it, I put as little into mine as I can." To which Boswell replied, "Do what you will, Sir, you cannot avoid it." And here are three volumes to show that he was right. Dr. Chapman points out that Johnson has not been ranked high among letter-writers and his letters, not in the *Life*, are not much read except by ardent Johnsonians. He adds, shrewdly, that few of the readers of the *Life* are aware how large a part the letters included in it play in building up that matchless portrait. That is true, but readers of the *Life* are also well aware of the constitutional laziness of its subject. Johnson would hardly ever write anything unless he was compelled to do so. He seems to have hated the physical process of writing, and no one who feels as he did can ever be a good correspondent. There are practically no natural descriptions in his letters. There are as few reports of conversations. Occasionally he says something that brings a personality to life, as when he expects to see Boswell entering the room with "noisy benevolence," but this is rare indeed. Johnson liked children, especially young girls, and he is pleasant

and natural when he addresses Queeny Thrale. There is nothing really easy and gossiping about these letters. Johnson rarely wrote without a definite purpose, on business, or in reply to correspondents. There is no "divine chit-chat" here. Boswell seems to have stimulated the great man to write his liveliest letters, and Miss Aston obviously won his respect. Although Johnson was not a lively letter writer his correspondence adds up to a trim reckoning. After reading it, you capture a fuller realization of a great, lonely, and oddly pathetic character.

There have been very few periods in our history when essay writing has been more in the ascendant than it is at present. This is odd because practically nothing is done to encourage writers in this form except by some of the weeklies and a few of the monthlies which publish "middles," *The Times*, with its urbane "Fourth Leaders," and the *Manchester Guardian* with its famous "Back Pagets," now relegated to another part of the paper but still as carefully and well selected as ever. Headed by Sir Max Beerbohm and Mr. J. B. Priestley, there are essayists at work now who would compel any anthologist to include some of their writings in a comprehensive selection of examples of this medium. Mr. E. M. Forster, Mr. Bernard Darwin, Mr. Neville Cardus, Virginia Woolf, Miss Rose Macaulay, are some of the names that come to mind. It is startling to find any publisher bold enough to-day to bring out as a young author's first book a volume of essays, and that is just what Messrs. Heinemann have done with Mr. Michael Lloyd's *Apulian Summer and Other Episodes*. Mr. Lloyd may come to look upon this first sheaf with disfavour in time, because it is badly overwritten in parts. He will never have any reason to criticize his honesty of purpose in recording his

initiation into the world of vision.

During the last century his family lived in Italy. He himself spent some months in Apulia during the last war when he was working in Military Intelligence. He seems to have lived two lives at that time, one with his army friends, the other in exploring alone the little city of Bitonto and the countryside around. Demobilized, Mr. Lloyd went up to Oxford and makes a sharp contrast between the northern city in winter, cold and mediæval, with the sun-drenched landscape he has recently left. The book ends with a return to Italy where, he writes, "nothing stood between me and the primitive soul of that place."

Apulian Summer is witness to a young writer's joy in beauty and in the use of words. Mr. Lloyd is in no sense a "lazy" writer. He never uses a cliché. His search for the just, the fit epithet or image is untiring. He never lets up. It must have been a strain for him to write—having made this very rash statement, I am prepared to hear by return of post that he dashed off *Apulian Summer* in a month—and at times I found it a strain to read. Few young writers, as conscientious as Mr. Lloyd is, realize that there are times when the obvious is the right and necessary thing. Almond paste in large quantities can become horribly indigestible, and as I turned Mr. Lloyd's pages there were times when I reached out for the literary Bicarbonate. Mr. Lloyd is courageous enough. He is even prepared to challenge the creator of "Zuleika Dobson" on his own ground. This is Mr. Lloyd's version of the Oxford chimes:

As I stood there watching, the hour struck: first Magdalen's boyish tenor, jubilant, buoyant, dancing in step like a young man setting out to love or war, with a high opinion of his amiable face, and every conquest an easy one, breaking off in his fingers like magnolias. Then

as his passing faded on the air, Merton, golden and mellow as the crust on honey, hoary as Camembert over a liquid depth of tone, lying warmly on the palate like a sweet Bordeaux, followed in more stately time. I stood for an instant in a cage of bells. They drew fine threads of silver round me, thrilling and involving me in a hanging grille of chimes.

Only a highly conscious stylist could have written that lyrical passage. Many young readers will exclaim with pleasure when they read it, and it is as natural that they should do so, as it is that Mr. Lloyd should have written it. It is deeply felt and scrupulously rendered. I hope that in his future books—there should be many of them—Mr. Lloyd will give even more careful attention to what he wants to say, and a little less to how he says it. If he can introduce the human element more freely and easily, so much the better for his work. *Apulian Summer* is a most interesting venture, both for a young and promising writer and for his publishers. I wish they could have found it possible to print the book on more attractive paper.

Mr. William Sansom is another young author who has already ten books to his name, but *Pleasures Strange and Simple* is his first collection of essays. Readers of his work will expect them to be strongly descriptive, and so they are. "He has," says the publisher, "the classic gifts of the essayist—ease, directness, point." True enough, but he lacks a quality possessed by most of the eminent writers in this medium—intimacy. By this I do not mean a button-holing manner which can speedily end in the bored exasperation of the reader. I refer to the natural and apparently inevitable revelation of the writer's personality. All the great essayists do this. Mr. Sansom does not. His is a restless mind. He flits about the world like a benevolent

gnat. There is no sign of slipped ease here. He seems to be a first-class descriptive writer and not an essayist in the fullest and highest sense of the word. He can write delightfully about "The Baths in My Life"—I recommend him to try the hot brine at Droitwich—and yet he manages to be oddly impersonal about them, though

I must record his collective comment, "to each I owe a wet gratitude." Always readable, yes, and truly gifted, but in this book mainly superficial. That is not altogether surprising when one reads the list of publications in which various of these essays first appeared.

ERIC GILLET.

TOM QUIXOTE *

By HUGH LYON

IT is significant, if historically inadequate, that Thomas Hughes should to the great majority be known only as the author of a school story, begun in a moment of idleness and at first published anonymously. For there were imbedded in his character, as this admirable "Life" reveals on almost every page, characteristic traits of boyishness which he never grew out of. He was no intellectual but a man loving games and hard knocks and the open air, with a keen sense of fun and a simple moral code; at the same time he clung to a youthful idealism, ready to fight to the end for what he believed to be right, working "upon the plan that pleased his boyish thought." Though he was deeply influenced by Arnold, he escaped the "intellectual awareness and spiritual drives that were almost morbidly intense," which were such potent incentives to Stanley, Matthew Arnold and Clough. Like Tom Brown in his story, for most of his time at Rugby he sat loose to rules and responsibilities, more afraid of his headmaster than inspired by him. It was only at the end of his time that he began to appreciate the great man, largely as a result of an incident which did Hughes himself no credit. The authors of this book write with real insight both of Hughes' own time at Rugby and of the book he wrote

about it. But oh, Mr. Mark, and oh, Mr. Armitage, Rugby and Shrewsbury were not "new schools" in the eighteenth-thirties!

Tom Brown's School Days was published when Hughes was thirty-five, with nearly forty more years' windmill-tilting ahead of him. Already, while he was at Oriel, the influence of Clough and others had brought the shades of the prison-house about his careless career of cricket, rowing, boxing and a minimum of study. He began to look at the world about him, changed from Tory to Liberal, and soon after became a resolute champion, in the company of F. D. Maurice, Kingsley and Ludlow, of Christian socialism and the co-operative movement. The authors give an attractive picture of a typical refusal to surrender his cherished beliefs at the bidding of the extremists:

At the end of the meeting the National Anthem was played, and several revolutionary Chartists hissed. Hughes sprang to a chair and in a voice that all could hear announced that the first man who hissed the Queen's name would have personally to settle accounts with him. As Mr. Hughes' fist was well known as one not to be despised this gave a moment's pause. The pianist struck up

* *Thomas Hughes*: by Edward C. Mark and W. H. G. Armitage. Benn. 30s. net.

once more, and the hisses were drowned in loyal singing.

Now that Hughes had become a famous author he was able to bring his pen into play on behalf of the working-class movement, as well as using his legal knowledge and spending his evenings teaching boxing at the Working Men's Club. During the next few years, in addition to an expression of simple "public school" faith in his essay *Religio Laici*, he published many articles and letters in criticism of oppressive laws or selfish plutocrats. He was elected to Parliament in 1865, and thus received another platform for his campaign, in and (more often) out of season, for fair dealing between employers and employed. His single-mindedness lost him many allies who were more prudent or self-interested than himself, and his boyish refusal to see faults in or question the motives of his friends led to many frustrations and disappointments. But, if his hopes were dashed and his charity abused, his resilient faith carried him on undaunted to fresh struggles.

At one time indeed it looked as if he might yet carry all before him:

... At forty-eight, Tom Hughes was at the zenith of fame and fortune; not only as an author but as a politician, businessman and national figure. His views on the necessity of legalizing the trade unions had been recognized by Parliament; his services to the cause of co-operation by election to the chairmanship of the first congress of the movement; his practical outlook by an invitation to preside over the affairs of the great Crystal Palace at Sydenham. He was a Queen's Counsel, and in May, 1870, he became a bencher of his Inn. G. F. Watts had painted his portrait. As the very model of what a Labour M.P. should be, J. E. Ritchie had included him in a gallery of leading British senators.

But it was not to be. The next ten years saw a gradual defeat, a series of gallant rearguard actions against implacable and often unexpected enemies. It is a sad story. He suffered many personal losses in his family and many defections among his followers and friends. His hopes, both private and public, came to nothing. Yet, with head bloody but unbowed, he fought on; it was at the end of this time that he published another version of his credo, his lectures entitled *The Manliness of Christ*. This was his apologia, his justification.

All this time another absorbing concern had woven itself into his life: his great interest in the New World and his warm advocacy of Anglo-American friendship. It all began with his enthusiasm, dating from 1850, for the work of James Russell Lowell, an enthusiasm which led later on, in a visit Hughes paid to the poet in Boston, to one of the happiest friendships of his life. In the Civil War, Hughes' sympathies had from the first been with the North, and with his passion for getting men to be friends with one another he had ever since laboured to smooth over the differences between the nations. And now, in 1878, his eyes turned from the sorry spectacle at home, and he dreamed of founding across the sea a community unsullied by the weaknesses and jealousies which had so marred the forward march of Labour. With his usual impulsiveness he seized an opportunity to acquire (with the help of colleagues not all as honest or disinterested as himself) an expanse of land in Tennessee, and there brought into being a new "Rugby," where the typical young public-school man, who could find no place in the new industrial England, could create a society founded on Christian principles and maintained by honest labour. For a time all seemed to go well. But, as so often, Hughes'

lack of suspicion and his unsound judgment combined with the cunning of his associates and the shiftless character of his first colonists to bring the whole scheme to nothing. To-day there is a church in Rugby, Tennessee, and a few houses (in one of which Hughes' old mother died). Nothing beside remains.

It is difficult to praise too highly the thoroughness with which this book is documented, its balanced judgments and attractive style. It gives us, apart from all else, an absorbing study of the early history of the rise of Labour. But it is above all the picture of a man "who never turned his back but marched breast forward." Thomas Hughes will for ever be beloved as the author of a classic which has rejoiced the hearts of thousands. But he was more than this. Were he alive to-day, as his authors say, Tom Hughes, with all his faults,

would still know which way to head, and would be trudging straight down the road that leads there, perhaps drawing with him some of the faint of heart. It would be good to have him with us.

HUGH LYON.

OUR GREAT-GRANDMOTHERS

THE EARLY VICTORIAN WOMAN. By Janet Dunbar. *George Harrap*. 15s.

It might appear to later eyes that the early Victorian woman herself often received alimient and impulse from the very circumstances which seemed the most calculated to narrow and bind her. . . .

THE shrewd perception of Miss Janet Dunbar has taken this for her underlying motif, knowing there is really no such thing as the Victorian Woman, nor the Elizabethan Woman, nor the Queen Anne Woman; but just women conditioned by the limitations or releases of the era they live in. As a refreshing change from the

usual tiresome attitude, she sees nothing screamingly funny about being an Early Victorian, and is therefore not forever digging us in the ribs and inviting us to chuckle with her over all those fallacies, stale by now, of swoons and declines and ask-papa and the-little-woman's - place - is - the - home, wool-work, bogus respectability and pious sentiments worked into samplers. She avoids also those obvious comparisons between then and now in the matter of food and prices, with wry grimaces at items like beef at 6d. a pound or a turkey at 8s., merely inserting them as matters of dispassionate interest, instead of picking them out to mock at the misfortunes of our own war-damaged period.

Based on an accumulation of fascinating material, her verdict on the "delicate sex" of that fat and prosperous era between 1837 and 1857, is that she displayed sense as well as sensibility; needing

a hard-headed business sense to enable her to hold her own in a society where she was denied elementary civil rights.

Indeed, what giant stature they had, these almost forgotten pioneers and reformers; what courage and enterprise; and how clearly, how authoritatively, the author presents them for our belated gratitude, remarking that it was their very success in a hundred fights that has caused them to be so easily forgotten; once a wrong has been acknowledged and adjusted, after a very little time it is taken for granted that it has been right always and always, ever since the Flood. Catherine Wilkinson, for instance, who knows now about Catherine Wilkinson?—

. . . a poor woman who lived in one of the back-streets of Liverpool . . . and possessing, moreover, a copper in her own kitchen, hit upon the plan of serving her neighbours. . . . She offered to those who wished it the opportunity of washing at her copper; this boon, small as it may appear, was eagerly sought. . . . "From this simple circumstance . . . the idea of erecting public baths and wash-houses was taken." The first was built at Liverpool in 1842; a penny was charged for a tub of water for washing clothes. By 1850 London

OUR GREAT-GRANDMOTHERS

and many of the provincial cities had built baths and washhouses, and some also had swimming-baths. The establishment at Lambeth offered an extra facility—an infant-school and nursery where women could leave their children while doing their washing.

... In the course of a few years there was a system of public washhouses throughout the country. And it had all developed from the neighbourly kindness of a woman in a back-street.

Similarly, Mary Carpenter, who toiled among the worst slums of Bristol, Mrs. Hugo Reid and Mary Wollstonecraft, Sarah Trimmer and Caroline Chisholm (known as the Emigrants' Friend) are all names rescued from oblivion; and Elizabeth Blackwall, of Philadelphia, who was entered on the British Medical Register as the first qualified woman doctor in Great Britain.

On the lighter side, Miss Dunbar entertains us with delicious scraps of information from contemporary sources. We are reminded of the origin of "bloomers": Amelia Bloomer's historic invention that came from the United States in 1851, providing *Punch* with "weeks of light-hearted larking." *The Child's Guide to Knowledge*, too, is great fun as well as having once been a textbook as celebrated as Mangnall's *Questions* for enlightening the infant mind on such importances as the origin of pin money:

Q. What queen first made use of pins in England?

A. Catherine Howard, the fifth wife of Henry VIII.

Q. Were they not considered a great luxury, and not fit for common use?

A. Yes; the maker was not allowed to sell them in an open shop, except on two days of the year, at the beginning of January.

Q. What old custom did this give rise to?

A. To husbands giving their wives money at the beginning of the year, to buy a few pins; therefore money allowed to a wife for her own private spending is even now called "pin-money."

Another pleasing extract, this time from a private diary of 1848, relates that it was then the custom in middle-class households for the mistress to bake a rich fruit-cake

for her servants to take home on Mothering Sunday, one of the very rare occasions in the year when they were allowed a holiday at all (though an unusually broad-minded family allowed Mary and Ellen to go to the races at Epsom in their new shawls and bonnets: "Mama and I prepared dinner. Mama adjured them to make no rough acquaintances.") The Simnel Cake was supposed to bring the mistress good luck:

I'll thee a simnel bring
'Gainst thou go a-mothering,
So that when she blesses thee
Half that blessing thou't give to me.

One of the most attractive chapters in the book is called "Shops," full of gaily-coloured incidents illustrating the heyday of the individual shopkeeper:

The man who owned his business and worked it for himself. He might be a craftsman, like a bootmaker, or a tradesman, like a linen-draper, but he knew his craft or trade, and he also knew that quality counted.

Those were the days when a dairy in the City (complete with cows) could be compared with an elegant milk-shop in the Quadrant, Piccadilly; when a Mr. Harrod, a tea-merchant, bought a small grocery business in Knightsbridge, and a Mr. Peter Robinson a draper's shop in Oxford Street "opposite Jay's Mourning Warehouse." One could go on for ever with these lively contrasts, but in the hope that readers will choose their own favourite items, it must suffice that, passing the little corner shop with *Snuff and Segars* in flowing script above its portal, we drop in at the shop with an irresistible choice of sweetmeats for the children:

Nelson's Buttons, a peppermint confection stamped and shaped to the semblance of a naval button; and Buonaparte's Ribs—though what they were I cannot tell, save that they were much disapproved of by one old lady who records their "taking away the appetite for a good mutton dinner."

As for the pageant of famous women writers of Victoria's reign, Mrs. Gaskell,

George Eliot, Frances Trollope, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Harriet Martineau, the Brontës, they in particular—and more than Maria Edgeworth or Charlotte Mary Yonge (whose work, one critic said in high approval, “could be left open with perfect propriety on the drawing-room table”)—they, no less than women writers of to-day, must have keenly enjoyed the sort of shocked review such as this which appeared in the *Leader*:

Women have made an invasion of our legitimate domain; they write dramas, they write treatises. This is the march of mind, but where, oh where, are the dumpings? Does it never strike these delightful creatures that their little fingers were meant to be kissed, not to be inked? Are there not husbands, brothers, friends, lovers to coddle and console? Are there no stockings to darn, no purses to make, no braces to embroider? My idea of a perfect woman is one who can write, but won't.

G. B. STERN.

Novels

DESIRÉE. Annemarie Selinko. *Heinemann*. 15s.

THE EASTER PARTY. V. Sackville-West. *Joseph*. 10s. 6d.

A PICNIC BY WAGONETTE. Jean Ross. *Hutchinson*. 10s. 6d.

DEATH GOES HUNTING. Chris. Massie. *Faber and Faber*. 12s. 6d.

TOO SOON TO DIE. Henry Wade. *Constable*. 10s. 6d.

THE DESPERATE SEARCH. Arthur Mayse. *Harrap*. 10s. 6d.

I AM not at all surprised that vast numbers of copies of *Desirée* have been sold in other lands and tongues, though I am not historian enough to know whether Bernadotte, one-time Sergeant, then Marshal of France, finally King of Sweden, was such a man as Annemarie Selinko depicts—in most respects greater than Napoleon—nor even whether his wife Desirée, daughter of a Marseilles silk-merchant, was once betrothed to Napoleon. Did Junot, Marmont—never mind! This

long book offers an intimate, privileged and undeniably sentimental account—that of Desirée—of Napoleon's rise and fall, of the men and women around him. Whether its character-drawings are historically true, whether Desirée's honest naivety is a safe guide, does not matter so much as the sense of comfortable, gossipy reality which the novel presents within a framework of fact, and which is the measure of the author's skill as a novelist. Praise is due too to the translators, who have done a most competent job, generally avoiding, as does the story, both the archaic and the blatantly modern. Prettily sugary, a little too close to fairy-story romance, too carefully unsophisticated, but a book for the many to read with pleasure. Is not that something these days?

What is puzzling about *The Easter Party* is what impelled its writing, what lies behind it. I was conscious—but no more than that—of something allegorical or symbolical, something that gave the characters a touch at least of the inhumanity of figures in a morality play. The book has the notable qualities of style, the easy power of description, that are to be expected of Miss Sackville-West. These are employed to tell how Sir Walter Mortibois, handsome barrister professionally irresistible, is so disgusted with the evil in the world that he condemns his beautiful wife Rose to sterility. Moreover, he sets less store by her than by his dog and his home. Down for the long weekend (but its season as well as its length is important) come Sir Walter's doctor-brother, and, his dowdy sister-in-law with ineffectual husband and young son just home on leave. Add Lady Juliet, lovely, libidinous but with unsuspected depths, and an ancient butler, and the scene is set, though some even of these few characters have small roles. The doctor indulges in a cruel-to-be-kind experiment which strains credulity. A natural disaster inflicts a further blow upon Sir Walter (hereabouts not even the effective writing quite masters the melodrama). From all this Easter suffering Rose and her husband emerge to face, confidently, a prospect of unexampled happiness.

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Thirty years ago Stephen Day-Finch, now headmaster of his father's foundation, Swanningford preparatory school, was crippled for life when the wagonette overturned on a picnic. Yet he still keeps up the annual picnic in the self-same wagonette. He is unaware of the boys' boredom and—this year—of an undercurrent of fear associated at all events with two of the visitors who are to join the picnic—two visitors, from theatre-land, for whom Stephen's crippling has special significance. The accident, of course, repeats itself—with psychological effects (especially upon the boys) which I found it hard to accept. Accept them, however, and the consequent crisis in the school's life, the struggle for the reversion of the headmastership, becomes intelligible as well as absorbing and entertaining. Yet all the time, though Jean Ross makes her characters' intensity of feeling very real, it is mighty difficult to believe that Swanningford can ever have been much

of a school or that even its Governors could have believed that Stephen was a good headmaster. Surely during *A Picnic by Wagonette* I caught a mocking echo from *Decline and Fall*.

You may say that Chris Massie presents a vision of life after a murderer's death. For his book begins with the disembodied Brodribb watching Sheriff and Chaplain beside his own hanged corpse. Then, with Brodribb, we plunge into an existence in which he gradually discovers a pattern, we at the same time discovering what it was that led Brodribb to the condemned cell. So *Death goes Hunting* for a justification of cause and effect—a hunt to which the author gives the epithet "sardonic" but to which perhaps "satirical" can better be applied. As the publishers observe, the book is not written for babes and sucklings—who certainly would make nothing of it. Nor is it a sunlit romance. But as an imaginative excursion into the macabre which at the same time provokes adult questioning of the validity of the self-righteousness of our selves and times, it is powerful and exciting. Its end many readers will find painfully moving.

Henry Wade, purist amongst detective-novelists, essays in *Too Soon to Die* the difficult task of showing us both the crime and the detection. He makes a first-rate job of it, but one that is uncomfortable for the reader—as is almost inevitable when the victim of the detection is sympathetically presented. This is true of the hero-villain of *Too Soon to Die* up to a point—the point where circumstances force him to measures more drastic than were originally planned. On the other hand Henry Wade goes some way to meet this criticism by endowing Grant Jerrod with qualities which reconcile the reader to the conclusion, at least so far as it concerns Grant. I need scarcely add that the police side of the business is masterly in its quiet realism—a phrase which the contrast between Henry Wade's book and Chris Massie's makes inevitable.

The last book on my list, like the first, has a simple story to tell, and tells it simply. *The Desperate Search* indeed tells

The State of LATIN AMERICA

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Germán Arciniegas has been twice Minister of Education in the Colombian Government. His book aims at providing a survey of the political realities of the Latin-American states, whose total population exceeds that of the U.S.A. For each state he provides a brief outline of its modern political history and an analysis of the current political régime.

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two stories: of Vince Ardagh, charter-pilot, his film-star ex-wife and Julie, the reporter, and his (or, perhaps, their) quest for the plane that has crashed somewhere in the wild coastland in the far north of British Columbia; and of Vince's children, eight-year-old Dan and two-year-old Janet, sole survivors of the crash, and of Dan's stout-hearted conduct of a peril-fraught anabasis. The book, set in unfamiliar territory and circumstances which Arthur Mayse makes as real to us as they are to him, is tense with an excitement heightened by Dan's unawareness of the supreme pursuing peril, the man-hating old cougar. An unsophisticated tale, perhaps, but there is no need to complain of that, especially since unsophistication fits the scene and the characters. Nor is it artless unsophistication; its author's skill persuades us to swallow not only the unfamiliarities but also the improbabilities of his stirring story.

MILWARD KENNEDY.

BOOKS IN BRIEF

ISSUED in an austere format, with a dust-jacket headed *Phillipps Studies No. II, The Family Affairs of Sir Thomas Phillipps* (C.U.P., 15s.), gives no hint of the astonishing and fascinating biography Mr. A. N. L. Munby, the Librarian of King's College, Cambridge, has written. Sir Thomas Phillipps, the famous book collector and founder of the *Bibliotheca Phillippica*, was the ace of curmudgeons, the craziest of controversialists. Mr. Munby has told the story of his private life with great ingenuity.

* * *

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★ ————— *Macmillan* ————— ★

(Hodder & Stoughton, 16s.). This is a modest and thoroughly engaging narrative.

* * *

This search for personal freedom was also responsible for Mr. Adrian Conan Doyle's *Heaven Has Claws* (Murray, 16s.). He certainly achieved a variety of adventures, including hazardous small-boat trips in storm-ridden waters, battles with man-eating sharks, experiences of giant Manta Rays, and other tropical sub-marine dangers. He also had the curious experience of hearing an Oriental sing Africanized versions of Jacobite songs.

* * *

Mr. George Dangerfield is a most capable biographer and historian. In his latest book he has turned from Liberal England to *The Era of Good Feelings* (Methuen, 30s.), which gives the chapter

of nineteenth-century history, covering America's coming of age and the three main crises of Anglo-American relations.

* * *

The Story of the Rockefeller Foundation (Odhams, 25s.) has been written by Mr. Raymond Fosdick, who was its President from 1936 to 1948, and a Trustee since 1921. It contains a thoroughly readable account of the Foundation's many activities in ninety-three different countries. They constitute a record of the organization established by John D. Rockefeller Snr. in 1913, "to promote the wellbeing of mankind throughout the world." In intention and achievement the Foundation has proved to be the most astounding philanthropic enterprise ever put into action. It is obvious that a book of three hundred and thirty pages can give only a very general idea of the work it has done.

* * *

Among American naturalists Mr. Edwin Way Teale takes a high place. His interests are extensive and fruitful, and in *The Lost Woods* (Hale, 21s.) he ranges cheerfully from an account of a visit to Thoreau's Walden, very little changed after a hundred years, to a trip in a submarine to a submerged forest. There is a fascinating chapter on the wood Ibis of the South. Mr. Teale writes pleasantly and there are some magnificent illustrations.

* * *

Mr. V. S. Pritchett's *Books in General* (Chatto & Windus, 12s. 6d.) surveys books and writers sanely and revealingly. He is not a critic who makes a book review an excuse for airing his opinions without relevance or reason. He gets quickly to the heart of the matter and his predilections are international. This is an urbane, satisfying book of criticisms. They were well worth reprinting.

* * *

Since Meredith's famous remark about his "wind in the orchard" style, Carlyle seems to have fallen out of favour and his

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Harold Brighouse

The author of *Hobson's Choice*, a well-known contributor to the "Manchester Guardian", provides in this autobiography a striking portrayal of life in the twin-worlds of literature and the theatre. Illustrated. 12/6 net

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BOOKS IN BRIEF

works are little read to-day. His biography by Julian Symons, and a selection of his wife's letters, edited by Lady Bliss, is now followed by *Thomas Carlyle: Letters to His Wife* (Gollancz, 25s.), edited by Trudy Bliss. Lady Bliss has done her editorial work deftly and well.

There have been some notable family businesses owned by Quakers, and Dr. Arthur Raistrick's *Dynasty of Iron-founders: The Darbys of Coalbrookdale* (Longmans, 30s.), a beautifully produced and illustrated book, gives a well-documented and well-written account of a great family concern, founded in 1699 and managed by the Darbys until 1851. Five generations had a hand in it and they were unusually aware of the social changes of the time and often in advance of them. This is a valuable contribution to industrial history.

About two years ago, *I Found Adventure*, a book about Lapland and the Arctic by Mr. Jim Ingram, aroused a good deal of attention. The writer was born crippled and lost his sight when he was sixteen. At the present time Mr. Ingram, with his sight partially restored, is taking a course at a Teachers' Training College in Sheffield, with a view to teaching physically handicapped children, and his new book, *The Land of Mud Castles* (John Long, 15s.), an account of his travels in Morocco and the desert country of the Western Sahara, has just appeared.

The Poetic Muse seems to be accomplishing a happy return to sanity. Mr. Wallace Stevens is one of the senior American poets. He is among their best. His *Selected Poems* (Faber & Faber, 12s. 6d.) exhibit a pleasant, almost



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anecdotal, lyric charm. He is less at ease with philosophical abstractions.

* * *

One Little Boy (Gollancz, 13s. 6d.), by Dr. Dorothy M. Baruch, with the collaboration of Dr. Hyman Miller, has been described by an American critic as "the most searching inquiry into the mind of a child requiring psychotherapy I know of." The approach and treatment of the theme are exclusively American, and it is to be hoped that interest in it over here will be strictly limited.

* * *

There is no end to anthologies, but Professor Kenneth Muir's *Elizabethan Lyrics: A Critical Anthology* (Harrap, 10s. 6d.) is remarkable for the excellence of the texts used, and for the truly helpful and scholarly introduction contributed by the editor.

E. G.

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Edwin Muir, *The Observer*

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CHATTO & WINDUS

Financial

ESTATE DUTY THE CASE FOR ITS REDUCTION

By SIR EDWARD BOYLE, Bt.

LET me, first of all, explain my purpose in writing. No one can fairly claim that representatives of industry—or members of Parliament—have neglected to press with sufficient vigour for a reduction in the burden of taxation. But whereas plenty of people have stressed the need for a reduction in the standard rate of income-tax, for the eventual abolition of purchase-tax, and for the immediate abolition of all taxation on company profits put to reserve, there has been far less emphasis on the need for an overall reduction in the burden of estate duty. It seems to me that far too many people are ready to assume that the present levels of estate duty must be allowed to remain substantially unaltered; and I want to suggest certain reasons why no Conservative Government should contemplate such a prospect.

One of the worst features of our present tax system is, beyond question, the effect of estate duty on small family businesses. It is impossible to defend the effects of the notorious Section 55 of the Finance Act, 1940, which altered the whole basis of assessment for one-man businesses, and substituted the net value of the assets for the notional price which these assets might be expected to realize in the open market. Years of inflation, and of a steadily depreciating pound, have rendered this clause far more burdensome than its originators—in all probability—had ever intended. Actually, it was designed to end a not uncommon form of tax-avoidance, rather as the infamous "ring fence" clause in the 1951 Finance Act was designed to prevent avoidance of profits tax. Just as controls breed one another, so excessive taxation itself brings about the need for greater refinements of fiscal torture! Estate duty to-day yields about £170 million in a full year. Though many

ESTATE DUTY

individuals are grievously hurt by its exactions, it can hardly be said to play a major part in the Chancellor's calculations ; indeed, its present levels are justified far more frequently on social than on financial grounds. I wish now to put the arguments—both financial and social—in favour of a reduction.

In the first place, it seems to me quite clear that there is no more powerful incentive towards the creation of new wealth than the desire of a man to leave his family better provided for. People sometimes try to evade this issue by pointing out that no one can earn a fortune these days, anyway ; but this only proves that the level of direct taxation—especially on the higher ranges of earned income—is also too high. The Socialist policy of penalizing success is not only morally wrong, it is also economically indefensible, especially when applied to a country like Great Britain, which can only survive through the skill of its *entrepreneurs*. Secondly,

the present levels of estate duty undoubtedly result in a considerable volume of dis-saving. The same can be said of income tax and surtax. Colin Clark is quite right ; once the Government takes more than a certain percentage of the national income, everyone is determined to maintain his net spending power by some means or other—for example, by claiming higher wages, or by spending accumulated savings (either his own or his ancestors') which would otherwise be taxed at his death. It is worth noting that Section 55 of the Finance Act, 1940, to which I have already referred, has had a very adverse effect on the volume of industrial savings, since the ploughed-back profits of one-man businesses are frequently turned into liquid capital by the issue of shares designed to anticipate estate duty.

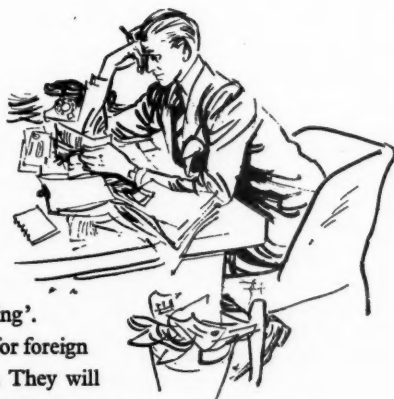
But the moral and social arguments against steeply progressive rates of duty are even more important. In the first

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place, it is extremely important for any community that a number of its citizens should enjoy financial independence. Mr. R. F. Harrod, in his *Life of Lord Keynes*, put this point very well: "A man, however high-minded, may have to moderate his crusading zeal, if bread-winning demands it. Our planners of Utopia should think of Keynes before deciding that the best plan is to have all members of the community dependent upon a salary." (It is also worth noting that Mrs. Woodham-Smith, in her admirable biography of Florence Nightingale, showed that Miss Nightingale's achievement would have been impossible but for her independent inherited income.)

My second argument is a moral one. It seems to me vitally important to insist, in a democracy, that every citizen should have justice done to him. Very high rates of estate duty certainly encourage the belief that the owners of property do not matter a "tinker's cuss"; and I regard it as wholly harmful when the deliberate lowering of the living standards of a minority is represented to the majority as something which they should approve.

Thirdly, it is even more important to remember that Socialists welcome very steeply progressive rates of estate duty as a means towards their ideal of the Classless Society—in effect, a society in which no one will count for anything unless he is an employee of the State, or a member of an approved trade union. I can only say that, for my own part, I am as sincerely opposed to this ideal as they are in favour of it; and my fears were not allayed, to say the least of it, when I read a most engagingly frank article by Mr. Denys Munby, entitled "Equality and the Welfare State," which appeared in *The Frontier* for December, 1952. Mr. Munby is not unduly disturbed by the thought that "One social ideal involves the supersession of others," and remarks that, because we wish to achieve certain other ideals, the culture created by our great country houses is one which "has to go by the board." His own cultural ideals are summed up in a horribly revealing phrase, "a place in the sun for the common

men." No doubt the common women will accompany them.

No sensible person supposes that the level of taxation can be reduced to anything like its pre-war figure. But that does not mean that every feature of our present fiscal system need remain with us for ever. It is my own belief that no Government is justified in taking more than three-quarters of the income of any of its citizens while he is alive, or more than three-fifths of his estate after he is dead. Beyond this point (or thereabouts), taxation serves only a political purpose, and one which no Conservative Government should approve.

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RECORD REVIEW

By ALEC ROBERTSON

Orchestral

ONE of the greatest benefits conferred upon us by the era of the long playing record is the possibility of getting to know a much larger range of music by contemporary composers, a benefit that will particularly appeal to those, outside the larger cities, who have little chance of hearing it except on the radio; and not always then. There is, of course, a large field to be covered; and it is to be hoped that British composers will be generously represented on records made over here.

This month H.M.V. give us a splendid recording of Walton's *Symphony in B flat minor*, which was adventurously done by Decca many years ago, with Hamilton Harty conducting. This time Walton himself conducts, no longer tentatively (as in past years) but obviously with great assurance, and the orchestra is the Philharmonia. The composer re-lives the harsh and powerful moods, relieved by rare moments of gentler feeling, which inform the music and shows us exactly what he means by directing the *Scherzo* to be played *con malizia*. (H.M.V. ALP1027.)

Cantelli's fine performance of Hindemith's *Mathis der Maler* Symphony, made



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Record Review

with the N.B.C. Orchestra and previously issued on 78's is now available on L.P. (H.M.V. BLP1010), and Brunswick, a company hitherto associated with light music, have recorded this composer's *Theme and Four Variations* (The Four Temperaments) which is extremely well played by the Zimble String Sinfonietta with Lukas Foss playing the important piano part. The temperaments are "The Sanguine, Choler, Flegeme, and Melancholy," and, oddly enough, the Phlegmatic movement proves to contain the most enjoyable music (Brunswick AXL2001.)

Under the title of *French Orchestral Music* Ansermet and the Suisse Romande Orchestra have made a very delightful record of Saint-Saëns' *Danse Macabre* and *Rouet d'Omphale*, Chabrier's *España* and *Marche Joyeuse* and Ravel's *Pavane*, the Ravel coming between the two Chabrier pieces. My allegiance to Beecham's wonderful old disc of *España* is not shaken (Columbia LX880) but as a recording this performance is, of course, much more vivid. The playing is throughout of high quality (Decca LXT2760). Another recording of Sibelius' Violin Concerto is issued this month, but does not contain a performance so memorably beautiful as that of the ever lamented Ginette Neveu (H.M.V. DB 6244-7), though it is, on the whole, preferable to the Stern/Beecham/R.P.O./ version now also on L.P. (Columbia 33C1008). The soloist is Camilla Wicks, with Ehrling conducting the Stockholm Radio Orchestra (Capitol CTL7026).

Kubelik's performance of Dvořák's *New World Symphony* with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (H.M.V. ALP1018) is the best we have had yet and the best recording. It is the second of the Mercury discs to be issued here by H.M.V. and shows off the musical merits of this recording system to greater advantage than *Pictures at an Exhibition*.

Boyce's eight symphonies are delightfully played by the Zimble String Sinfonietta (on Brunswick AXTL 1002-3) who add to their string ensemble mentioned above the extra wind players needed. Boyce wrote them somewhere between 1750 and 1765, and the style is similar to that of Handel's

Record Review

so-called *Oboe Concertos*, op. 3, which are really *concerti grossi*. There are some routine movements, but as a whole the music is most enjoyable.

Chamber Music

A lean month for chamber music only in the sense that few records have arrived for review; there are plenty on the way, particularly of works by Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. The Budapest String Quartet, with Milton Katims (viola) have recorded the C minor quintet (K406) which Mozart transcribed from one of the two serenades for wind octet composed in 1781-82. This is a stormy and melancholy work with a very impressive first movement and a most ingenious Minuet and Trio. On the reverse is the lovely D major quintet previously issued on S.P. The Budapest leader has rather a dry tone, but the playing of all concerned is excellent (Columbia 33CX1031).

Instrumental

Transcendental technique can be satisfying on its own account, and though I do not care to hear Strauss waltzes (*Blue Danube* and *Emperor*, in this case, the latter transcribed by the pianist) decked out and stretched out like this, the playing by Leonard Pennario is so amazing, so breath-taking that the critical conscience is smothered (Capitol CCL7514). Gerald Moore plays a number of pieces from Bartók's *Mikrokosmos* which are also interesting technically but of real musical value. Good performance and recording (H.M.V. B10409-10); and Artur Schnabel has done six of Chopin's Polonaises on H.M.V. ALP1028. The piano tone is well recorded, the playing musically and, in the A flat Polonaise, exciting.

Vocal

Kathleen Ferrier sings, most beautifully, a number of arias by Bach and Handel, sensitively accompanied by Boulton and the L.P.O., on Decca LXT2757. *All is fulfilled* from the St. John Passion stands out as an artistic experience of the highest order.

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